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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Do you support the
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PANDEMIC ALERT STATUS PHASE 6

As of August 5, 2009

Phase 1: Viruses circulating among animals have yet to cause infections in humans.

Phase 2: An animal influenza virus is causing infection in humans, and is considered a potential pandemic threat.

Phase 3: An animal or human-animal influenza virus has caused sporadic cases or small clusters of disease in people, but has not resulted in human-to-human transmission sufficient to sustain community-level outbreaks.

Phase 4: Verified human-to-human transmission of an animal or human-animal influenza virus able to cause "community-level outbreaks."

Phase 5: A strong signal that a pandemic is imminent and that the time to finalize the organization, communication, and implementation of planned mitigation measures is short.

Phase 6: The pandemic phase, is an indication that a global pandemic is underway.

For more information about the H1N1 flu, contact DPH at 236-8797, Monday to Friday, from 8am to 5pm, 234-8950 during after hours, e-mail cnmipheoc@gmail.com, or visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/.

Source: CNMI Department of Public Health, World Health Organization

INSIDE



Deal Nears

Some Chinese Muslims still detained at Guantanamo have overcome reservations about being sent to Palau.

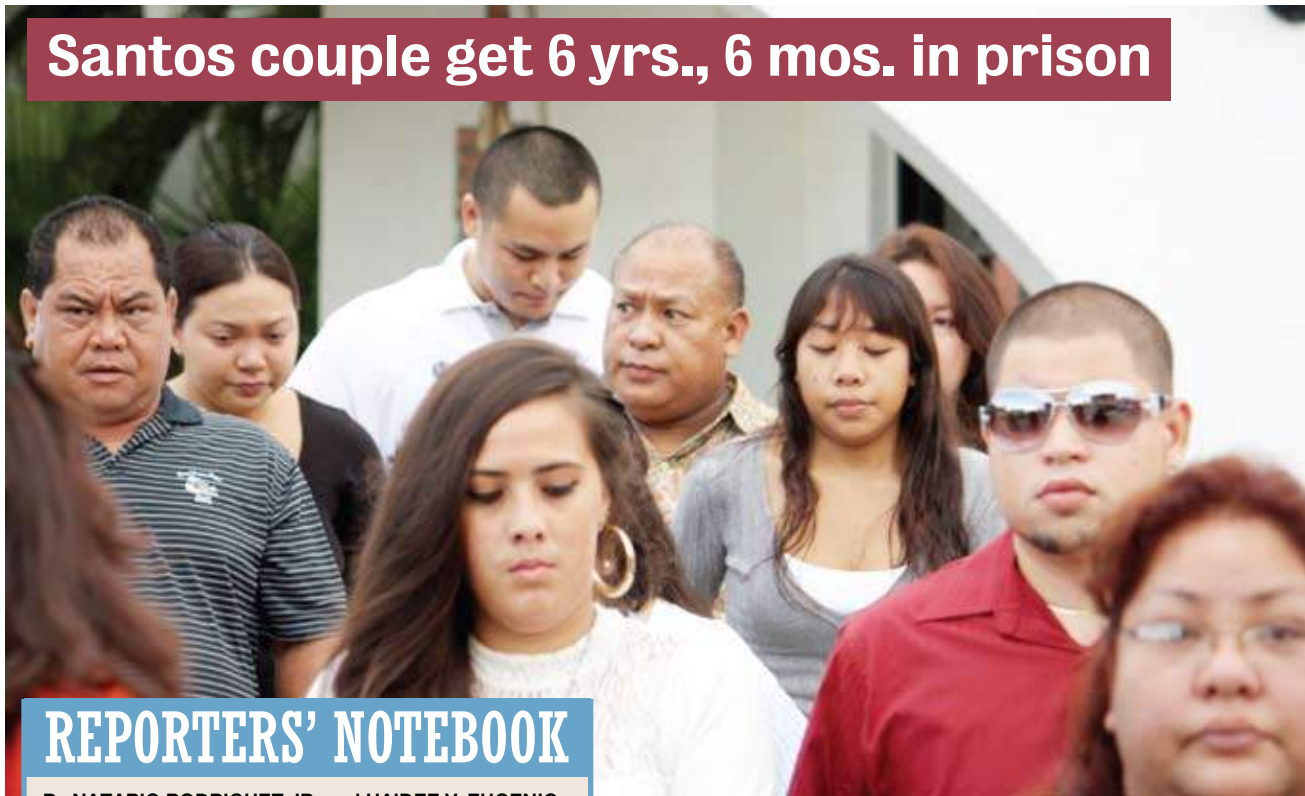
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7 independent House contenders align with Juan Pan. **PAGE 2**

Tinian donation center now permanently closed. **PAGE 6**

Villagomez gets 7-year sentence

Santos couple get 6 yrs., 6 mos. in prison



REPORTERS' NOTEBOOK

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR. and HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTERS

An hour before his 8am sentencing yesterday, former lieutenant governor Tim Villagomez, sister Joaquina Santos and her husband James Santos, together with family members, friends and supporters, were already assembled at the Kristo Rai Church entrance.

About five minutes before entering the federal

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Former lieutenant governor Timothy P. Villagomez, in the back in brown polo, is surrounded by his family and relatives as he walks from the Kristo Rai Church to the U.S. District Court for the NMI building in Garapan yesterday morning for his sentencing and that of his co-defendants: his sister, former Commonwealth Ports Authority personnel manager Joaquina V. Santos, and her husband, former Commerce secretary James A. Santos. Their families and relatives tried to shield the defendants from being photographed and interviewed by the media.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Former Commerce secretary James A. Santos, front right, his wife Joaquina Villagomez Santos, left in brown blouse and pants, and their family and relatives walk to the U.S. District Court for the NMI building in Garapan yesterday morning. Partially seen behind them is their co-defendant, former lieutenant governor Timothy P. Villagomez.

IN BRIEF

- **TIMOTHY P. VILLAGOMEZ**
 - 87 months in prison
 - 3 years supervised release
 - \$346,125 as restitution
- **JAMES A. SANTOS**
 - 78 months in prison
 - 3 years supervised release
 - \$25,000 fine
 - \$346,125 as restitution
- **JOAQUINA V. SANTOS**
 - 78 months in prison
 - 3 years supervised release
 - \$25,000 fine
 - \$346,125 restitution

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court sentenced former lieutenant governor Timothy P. Villagomez yesterday to seven years and three months in prison for his role in the Rydlyme corruption scandal.

See **VILLAGOMEZ** on Page 4

CNMI gets \$52.4M in ARRA award notifications, \$23.3M now in the bag

3 project managers to be hired this week

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
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REPORTER

The CNMI has so far received \$52.4 million in total notification of federal stimulus fund award, lagging behind four other insular areas such as American Samoa (\$67.7 million), U.S. Virgin Islands (\$131.3 million), Guam (\$152



Ada

million) and Puerto Rico (\$3.38 billion), latest local and federal data shows.

Commerce Secretary Michael J. Ada, however, said the CNMI is expected to have an additional award notification for \$44.3 million in state fiscal stabilization fund for a total of \$96.7 million by the end of

See **CNMI** on Page 4



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Local

7 independent House contenders align with Juan Pan team



Independent gubernatorial aspirant Juan "Pan" Guerrero, left, and his running mate House Floor Leader Joseph Camacho, second from right, join the seven independent candidates who filed their petition for candidacy at the office of the Commonwealth Election Commission on Capital Hill yesterday afternoon.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Seven independent House candidates aligned themselves yesterday with the team of Juan Pan Guerrero and Joseph Camacho, believing on the two's platform of "positive change" for the Commonwealth people.

Election Commission executive director Robert Guerrero officially received yesterday the petition papers of Vicky Guerrero, Ray Aldan, Henry Torres, Rita Dela Cruz, Mike Camacho, George Camacho, and Fred Deleon Guerrero, who filed their candidacies with the support of Juan Pan's team and their families.

Of the seven contenders, six are new faces and only one has experienced running for government office.

When asked why she's run-

ning, House candidate for Precinct 1 Vicky Guerrero said that party priorities are the real reason why the CNMI is in its present state.

"Our elected leaders refrain themselves from supporting workable and realistic legislation because of party direction and conditions. By being independent, my priority is to serve the people of the CNMI and not a political party that is controlled by a few," she told *Saipan Tribune*.

Although it is her first time to enter politics, Guerrero vowed to offer good governance if given the chance.

She said the CNMI has "too many laws" that need to be revisited to make them work.

For Henry Torres, who is running for a House seat in Precinct 2, Juan Pan's team has the basic platform that he believes could

stabilize the economy.

"They're hardworking people and their experiences speak for themselves. I believe in this team, that's why I aligned myself with them," he said, expressing confidence that the Juan Pan and Joe Camacho team would be victorious in the general elections.

Michael A. Camacho, who will run for Precinct 3's House seat, said it was the dedication and commitment of the Juan Pan team that enticed him to join the group.

"I like their decisions...their policies and platforms. Hopefully, with them, I can make a difference to the community," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Ray Aldan is running for a House seat in Precinct 2; while Rita Dela Cruz is eyeing a Precinct 3 seat; George Camacho and Fred Deleon Guerrero are running for Precincts 4 and 5 respectively.

Juan T. Guerrero was elated with the decision of the seven candidates to join his team.

"We are an independent group...and unlike party groups, we put the improvement of people on top of our list. We're not looking for jobs here and we're not looking to make politics a career. We are running because we believe we could bring new ideas and productive people to make improvements," he said.

Guerrero said his team is scheduled to leave for the U.S. on Aug. 24 to ask the support of absentee voters.

"I am asking people to also support these candidates because they can bring quality, honesty, transparency, and commitment to improve our people's lives," he added.

Joseph Camacho vowed to extend his support and assistance to the seven.

"These individuals never held office before...but they want to see change. We're happy with their decision and we're pulling out our resources together to make it happen. We have one commitment and that's to bring change," he said.

The team's campaign manager, Clyde Norita, described the "realignment" as a factor for the Juan Pan team.

"Unity is always beneficial. We're independent candidates and we respect their independence also. Though they have their own platforms, it mirrors what we have. This is unity for positive change," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

All seven "team mates" are welcome to join Guerrero and Camacho's campaign rallies and house visits, according to Norita.

He described the team's supporters on all three islands as "diversified."

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PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING REPROGRAMMING OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDS

Program Year	Activity No.	Activity Type	Activity Name	Activity Status	Amount from program	Reprogram to
2008		Public Facilities	Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School Rehabilitation of Buildings B, F, and G	Cancelled	\$800,000.00	
2008		Public Facilities	CNMI Football Complex	New		\$800,000.00

The public is invited to provide written and oral comments on the proposed reprogramming. Written comments will be accepted no later than 4:30 p.m., August 7, 2009, at the main office in Garapan, Post Office Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950. Oral comments may be relayed to Zenie P. Mafnas at telephone number (670) 234-7670, 6866, 7689, or 9447. Also, a public hearing regarding the reprogramming will be held at the Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School Cafeteria on August 13, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. Public comments will also be welcomed at such time. Persons with disabilities requiring reasonable accommodations to submit comments may also contact Zenie P. Mafnas at the telephone numbers above for assistance.



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6 hurt after alleged drunk driver causes accident

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

An alleged intoxicated man caused a car accident along Middle Road in Chalan Laulau Sunday night, leaving him and five other persons injured.

Department of Public Safety spokesman Jason Tarkong said yesterday that Mark O. Rabauliman, 33, was arrested shortly after he was discharged from the hospital.

Rabauliman sustained a laceration on his lower lip.

Tarkong said Rabauliman was brought to DPS for DUI processing (driving while under the influence of alcohol).

Rabauliman submitted to a breathalyzer test and his blood alcohol content was at .142, which is over the .08 legal limit, Tarkong said.

Rabauliman was cited for several traffic violations such as reckless driving and DUI.

"Based on the investigation, alcohol was a factor in the crash and speed has not been ruled out," Tarkong said.

Rabauliman was the driver of a blue 2006 Toyota Rav4 wagon, which sustained extensive damage to the front right portion.

Rabauliman's two male passengers were treated at the Commonwealth Health Cen-

ter and later released. One had a laceration on the scalp and complained of pain in the lower back. The second passenger complained of pain in the chest and neck.

The three occupants of the other car were treated at CHC and later released.

A 47-year-old woman who was the driver of a white 2006 Mazda sedan had a swollen forehead and complained of difficulty in breathing and numbness in her left arm.

One male passenger complained of pain to his shoulders and lower left leg. The other female passenger had a swollen forehead and com-

plained of pain to the back, neck, left arm, right shoulder, and chest.

The Mazda car had extensive damage to the rear left portion.

Tarkong said that, on Sunday at 11:56pm, police officers and fire personnel responded to a vehicular accident along Chalan Pale Arnold (Middle Road) near

H-Mart in Chalan Laulau.

Police learned that the Rav4 driven by Rabauliman caused the accident by rear-ending the Mazda car.

Coast Guard's 219th birthday observed at AMP

Officers from Marine Safety Detachment on Saipan held a simple ceremony to mark the 219th anniversary of the U.S. Coast Guard on Monday at the American Memorial Park.

CWO Wil Thomas, Lt. Jay Katz, and MST1 Michelle Duty, along with National Park ranger Nancy Kelchner, raised four Coast Guard flags at the Court of Honor amid the pouring rain.

"We are proud to celebrate the (U.S. Coast Guard's) 219th birthday with the National Park Service. We look forward to serving the residents of the

CNMI for many years to come," Katz said.

Kelchner said this has been the park's tradition to celebrate the birthday of every branch of the Armed Forces, including the Navy, Marines, Army, and Merchant Marine.

She said all six branches were here during the Battle of Saipan in 1944.

The Air Force unit is not included because it was not born until 1946.

"It's simply because when you step in the Court of Honor, you have to go back in time,"

she said.

The next birthday celebration would in November for the Marines.

Meanwhile, Kelchner reminds various schools and the community about the upcoming Pirate Month from Sept. 8-Oct 16.

This s program by the NPS is focused on developing team building among participating students.

The main highlight will be the Community Pirate Day on Sept. 19, with the chance to play the role of a pirate. (*Nazario Rodriguez Jr.*)

2 women convicted of prostitution

Superior Court Associate Judge David Wiseman convicted yesterday two women who were among five persons arrested during an anti-prostitution sweep in March.

During a bench trial, Wiseman found Gao Yue Ying Taman guilty of promoting prostitution and Lili Shao guilty of prostitution.

Wiseman ruled that the evidence presented proof of guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The judge, however, found Taman not guilty on the charge of permitting prostitution.

Wiseman set the sentencing

of the defendants for Aug. 25, 2009, at 9am.

Attorney Colin Thompson served as counsel for Taman, while assistant public defender Michael Brown was counsel for Shao. Assistant attorney general Brian Gallagher prosecuted the case.

The bench trial was conducted last July 15 and was continued yesterday.

A joint task force operation conducted by members of the federal and local law enforcement agencies on March 27 resulted in the arrest of five persons, mostly for allegedly en-

gaging in prostitution at a night club in Susupe.

The government charged only four persons as one served as a cooperating witness.

The case against Huifang Shao, also known as Mimi or Lulu, was dismissed during the trial for lack of any direct evidence, including the unavailability of the prosecution's witness.

During preliminary hearing, the case against Dan Dan Shao, also known as Lily, was dismissed after the court determined there was lack of probable cause to warrant the filing of charges against her. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)


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REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP 09-019

"A & E and Construction Management Services FOR PSS ARRA Projects"

The CNMI Public School System is soliciting competitive sealed proposals for **Archetectural, Engineering and Construction Management Services for the CNMI Public School System for ARRA Projects**. The Scope of Work is available at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office located on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950.

All proposals shall be in a sealed envelope marked "RFP 09-019" containing one (1) original and five (5) copies and shall be submitted to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office no later than **September 01, 2009 at 9:30 a.m.** Any proposal after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted.

There will be a Pre-Bid Conference for interested proposers on Tuesday, August 25, 2009 at 10:30 a.m. at the PSS COE Conference on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building at Capitol Hill on the island of Saipan.

Technical questions shall be in writing and addressed to David Loan, CIP Coordinator, via fax # (670) 664-3715 or email to loand@pss.cnmi.mp.

/S/ Rita A. Sablan, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Education

/S/ Robert Florian
Procurement & Supply Officer

REPORTERS

From Page 1

court building, they went inside the church and spent a moment in silent prayer.

Family members tried to cover the three defendants' faces as journalists tried to take pictures of them during their short walk to the Horiguchi building.

■ ■ ■

Chief Judge Alex R. Munson started the proceedings at exactly 8am and the process of sentencing Villagomez took one hour and 30 minutes, including the imposition of the 87-month prison term. This included the 15-minute recess after final arguments were made and another two minutes when Munson asked for documents from his office related to ordering the sentence.

Stified sobs followed the 15-minute recess, but the courtroom gallery was in complete silence as Munson read the sentence against the former lieutenant governor.

Composed and calm, Villagomez was immediately taken home by family members.

■ ■ ■

It took another hour and a half for the

federal court to complete the sentencing for James Santos.

The court then set separate proceedings for the sentencing of his wife Joaquina Santos at 2pm, which took less than three hours.

■ ■ ■

The number of people who came for the sentencing was small compared to the packed crowd that attended the first day of the jury trial and the succeeding days.

Relatives refused to comment when given a chance to say how they feel about the proceedings. They said they just came to give support but not to comment.

■ ■ ■

As sobs of some female members of the Villagomez and Santos families temporarily subsided in the packed federal courtroom yesterday morning, Judge Munson said the 87-month prison sentence for Villagomez should serve as a "warning" to everyone predisposed to commit the same felonies.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Eric O'Malley also said he hopes that government officials on Capital Hill thinking of committing corruption to "think about today," referring to the sentencing of Villagomez, the highest CNMI government official to be convicted in

a criminal case.

■ ■ ■

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has not issued an official statement on his former running mate and lieutenant governor's sentencing but his press secretary, Charles P. Reyes Jr., said the administration already "previously expressed disappointment with the development, sympathy for the family and all affected parties, and respect for the law and the judicial process."

Reyes said the administration stands by its previous statements on this matter.

■ ■ ■

Of two other gubernatorial candidates and several members of the 16th House of Representatives and 16th Senate who were asked for comments on Villagomez's sentencing yesterday, only Rep. Tina Sablan (Ind-Saipan) responded, saying it is an "encouragement to all honest citizens to report government abuse wherever they see it."

"Public corruption hurts the entire community," Sablan said.

■ ■ ■

As with the previous court appearances of Villagomez and the Santos couple, their families, relatives and supporters tried to block reporters from taking photos of the defendants,

especially that of the former lieutenant governor. Relatives were repeatedly saying, "block him, block him," as photographers tried to snap photos of Villagomez.

At one point, the *Saipan Tribune* camera was intentionally blocked from taking a photo when Villagomez exited the court building after his sentencing.

■ ■ ■

Except for Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Tenorio who is a relative of Villagomez, no other Cabinet member in the Fitial administration was present in the courtroom. Former Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio and his wife Sophie were also in the courtroom to support the defendants.

■ ■ ■

Outspoken Taotao Tano president Greg Cruz, who came with his son, said he's very happy with the way the judicial system works.

"This will bring a message to corrupt officials. I am glad that justice has been served."

Cruz said they were the first group that called for Villagomez's resignation from office.

"These powerful political leaders will wake up and learn from this indictment. It proves that no one is above the law. I

stand proud for the silent majority. And I thank the judge, the district court, the FBI and all those involved in the successful resolution of the case," Cruz said.

■ ■ ■

Junior C. Sablan from San Vicente said he is not satisfied with the sentence.

"The people spent a lot for their CUC bills. We have been suffocating from this. They should be given more prison terms, like 30 years," he said.

Sablan said the defendants were responsible for the hardships of common people in the CNMI, so the court must hand down a fair sentence.

"Justice is justice. He should face the truth. Leniency should not be given to them," he said.

■ ■ ■

The defense counsel said there were about 600 signatures in support of a motion and petition for the court to hand down a probation sentence or a sentence outside of the guidelines.

Other petitions also were submitted to the court on Tuesday.

Judge Munson asked the defense counsel point blank if the signatures represent a cross section of the community. She said she believes it is but is not sure.

CNMI

From Page 1

this month.

"The \$44.3 million is almost a done deal," Ada told *Saipan Tribune* in an interview yesterday.

Ada, who is the CNMI government lead person on American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding, said the biggest challenge has been obligating money that's already in the local government's account by Sept. 31.

In a presentation in yesterday's Saipan Chamber of Commerce general membership meeting at Hyatt Regency, Ada said the CNMI government would see to it that there's accountability in spending ARRA money.

The Commerce secretary said \$23.3 million is currently available to the CNMI for expenditure.

"[That] is what's currently in our bank. That's actual money there as of today," he said in an interview later.

Data from the federal website, www.recovery.gov, shows the amount of ARRA money so far made available to the CNMI is only \$21.929 million, but Ada said this has yet to be updated.

The CNMI also ranks fifth in terms of the amount of ARRA money so far made available based on federal data posted online.

Of the amount that's already in the CNMI, \$224,000 has so far been spent but Ada said he has yet to look at where and how this money was spent.

This month, the projects that are

expected to begin include the LaoLao Bay project which recently received a federal grant award of \$2.9 million, Energy Star tinting at government health centers on Saipan, Tinian and Rota, and lighting retrofitting at the Legislature, the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, and the Commonwealth Health Center.

Also to begin this month are the air conditioners' retrofitting at the Legislature and the Judiciary building, as well as street and parking light retrofitting to light-emitting diode on Saipan, Tinian and Rota.

In September, ARRA-funded projects that will move forward include the retrofitting of turbo chargers on engines 5 to 8 at the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., renewal energy projects by the Public School System, and the

Cross Island or Back Road project by the Department of Public Works.

If the CNMI government could have its way, it wants over \$400 million worth of projects to be funded by ARRA money.

Project managers

The Department of Commerce has issued a request for proposal for ARRA project managers to move the ARRA-funded projects forward. Of the five that submitted bids, three were selected and their contracts are expected to be routed this week.

Ada said the project managers will be named as soon as the contracts are finalized and signed by parties. He, however, said that the selected project managers are all local.

VILLAGOMEZ

From Page 1

His sister, former Commonwealth Ports Authority human resources manager Joaquina V. Santos, and her husband, former Commerce Secretary James A. Santos, were sentenced to six years and six months in prison each for their involvement in the scheme to defraud the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and the United States.

"[Villagomez] is convicted of four very serious felonies," said U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson. "As a lieutenant governor he was in a position of public trust. He betrayed that trust."

Munson ordered Villagomez and the Santos couple to jointly pay \$346,125 to the court for reimbursement to CUC. The judge also required the Santos couple to each pay a \$25,000 fine.

Villagomez and the Santos couple, through their lawyers, told the court that they are going to appeal to the Ninth Circuit.

Calm

Wearing a brown Hawaiian polo shirt and black slacks, the 46-year-old Villagomez was calm as he stood beside one of his lawyers, Leilani Lujan, and listened to Munson's pronouncement of the sentence.

After the sentence, Villagomez wiped

his eyes as teary-eyed family members and friends hugged him.

Villagomez and the Santos couple were found guilty on April 24 of all charges relating to CUC's purchases of excessive amounts of a chemical, at a 400 percent markup, from companies owned by James and Joaquina Santos. The scheme extended over 10 years, beginning when Villagomez was executive director of CUC, and lasting through 2007, when Villagomez was lieutenant governor, exercising de facto control over the utility.

At advice of their lawyers, the three did not say anything to the court before their sentences were handed down.

After serving their prison sentences, the three defendants will be placed on three years of supervised probation. Munson also ordered Villagomez and the Santos couple to each pay a \$400 court assessment fee and perform 200 hours of community service.

Damage to CUC

Munson said the defendants' scheme caused financial losses to CUC and damaged the public's trust in CUC and the CNMI government.

Munson said the sentences given to the defendants—prison terms, restitution, and supervised release—are appropriate to promote respect for the law.

He said he hopes the sentence will

send a strong message to deter other people from committing the same crimes.

Munson said the offense affected everybody in the community as it added damage to a financially struggling CUC, which at the time was suffering from heavy blackouts.

Munson said a probation sentence—as requested by the defendants—is not appropriate as the court doesn't believe that their family's case is extraordinary.

He said Villagomez has a big family who can take care of his elderly mother.

He said the Santos couple also have big family who can take care of their children and the Santos couple's ailing mother.

Munson said he gave the lowest term in the sentencing guidelines as the defendants have no criminal history or prior convictions.

No acceptance

Munson disagreed with the defense's assertion that the defendants have accepted responsibility for their actions by resigning from their positions.

"There was no acceptance of responsibility. There was no showing of admission of fault and culpability," said Munson, adding that the defendants in fact subjected the U.S. government to a test for a trial that lasted 19 days.

The judge believes that an appeal will not be successful as there is no de-

batable issue.

He allowed the three to remain free while a decision is made as to where they will be imprisoned. He ordered the defendants to contact the U.S. Marshal's Office thrice a week to check if a facility has already been designated.

Defense lawyers Leilani Lujan, Victorino Torres, and Ramon Quichocho, counsels for Villagomez, James Santos, and Joaquina Santos respectively, had recommended a probation sentence and, if there is a jail term, it should be converted into home confinement instead.

Lujan said Villagomez is taking care of his elderly mother and that he has minor children to support.

Torres and Quichocho said the Santos couple are taking care of James Santos' ailing mother and they also have children.

Clear message

U.S. Attorney Leonardo M. Rapadas said the sentences send a message to all government officials that no matter what positions of authority they hold, they will be held to high standards of conduct because of the trust placed on them by the people.

"The people should know that at all times when they do business with the government, there will always be fair dealings with those responsible government officials," Rapadas said

in a statement.

Significant sentence

Assistant U.S. Attorney Eric O'Malley who, along with First Assistant U.S. Attorney Jeff Strand, prosecuted the case, told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that he respects the court's decision.

"I think he [Munson] weighed all the factors. Of course I was asking for a more severe sentence. I thought that would have been more appropriate," O'Malley said.

At the hearing, O'Malley recommended 15 years in prison for Villagomez, 97 months for James Santos, and 78 months for Joaquina Santos.

O'Malley said this was such isolated event a stiffer sentence would have sent a stronger message.

"But, as I said, I do respect the court's decision. I think he imposed the lenient sentence because of many factors, not least of which was the fact that there's family members that had to be cared of," he said.

The prosecutor, however, still sees it as a significant sentence.

"I think that will send a message that there are heavy penalties to pay," he said.

O'Malley said they also want to convey to the community that they need people to come forward and give them information.

"I want to commend the witnesses at CUC for making this happen," he said.

Younis named to NMC board, four others to CEC

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has appointed Paz Younis to the Northern Marianas College Board of Regents, allowing her to serve a

full four-year term that will expire on June 27, 2013.

The governor, in his letter to Younis, said he and Lt. Gov. Eloy Inos are confident the newest appointee is qualified for the position and will be an

asset to the board.

Younis is a former executive director of the NMI Council for Humanities and has served as director of the Public School System's Head Start Program in the past. She is also listed as one of the publishers of *Marianas Variety*.

Younis' appointment requires the advice and consent of the Senate.

She is expected to file a statement of financial interest with the Office of the Public Auditor, along with her resume and drug test results.

Younis was off-island when contacted yesterday for comments.

There are two vacancies on the seven-member Board of Regents following the resigna-

tion of Agnes McPhetres early this year due to differences with some members of the board and the college management.

Recently, controversy marred the re-appointment of Juan Demapan to the board after the Senate failed to confirm him.

Demapan and the governor had a recent falling out when the Covenant Party junked Demapan's mayoralty candidacy for Saipan after he failed to complete the requirements set by the party, which endorsed Fitial's gubernatorial bid.

Board of Regents chair Charles V. Cepeda refused to comment yesterday on the new appointment to the board, say-

ing the board has yet to receive a formal communication from the administration.

Besides Cepeda, other board members include former Education Commissioner Dr. Rita Inos, former lawmaker Malua Peter, lawyer Janet King, and Elaine Hocog.

The governor also made four appointments to the Commonwealth Election Commission yesterday to ensure that the board will continue to function efficiently and effectively in the November general elections.

Board chair Frances Sablan was re-appointed to the position and was provided another four-year term of service, or until

August 2013. She will be representing Saipan on the board.

Sablan said she is happy with her re-appointment and expressed her gratitude to the governor for showing confidence and trust in her capabilities.

Sablan has been re-appointed to the commission several times already since the term of former governors Froilan Tenorio and Juan Babauta.

Fitial also approved the re-appointment of two other members for Saipan: Jose Itibus and Antonio Agulto. Both will serve until August and July 2013, respectively.

The commission is also set to welcome a new appointee for Rota if the Senate confirms Lelanie Manglona, whose term will expire on July 29, 2013.



Younis

Short circuit triggers fire at store in Chalan Kanoa

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_deltorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

An electrical short circuit triggered a fire at a store in Chalan Kanoa early Tuesday morning.

Department of Public Safety spokesman Jason Tarkong said yesterday that no one was hurt in the blaze that broke out at Ling Ling Store.

Tarkong said that on Tuesday at 1:20am, firefighters responded to a reported fire incident at Ling Ling Store.

When fire personnel arrived at the scene, they saw flames within the building and heavy smoke coming from the rear of the store.

Tarkong said the fire was placed under control at 2:18am.

Fire Prevention Unit personnel later determined that the fire was limited to the rear storage area of the store and that most of the damage was caused by moderate heat and smoke.

Fire investigator Daniel R. Suel's preliminary investigation showed that an electrical short circuit caused the blaze.

Tarkong said the case is considered closed.

On Monday night, a fire of still unknown origin engulfed an abandoned wooden house along Kanon Kanon Drive in As Matuis.

From February to April 2009, five arson cases occurred on Saipan. No one was arrested in those five incidents.

CPA board approves a \$65K contract for new comptroller

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Former deputy comptroller Frances Mafnas is now the Commonwealth Ports Authority's new comptroller and was given a one-year \$65,000 contract, according to the agency's executive director.

Mafnas, who earlier expressed her intention to retire from service, was initially asked to stay on at least until December to avert a possible impact on the agency's bond indenture agreements for both seaports and airports.

CPA executive director Efrain F. Camacho disclosed yesterday that Mafnas has reconsidered her decision to retire and was given a one-year contract that will end in August 2010.

The new comptroller will be receiving \$65,000—a position exempted from the government's salary cap.

Mafnas was appointed after David Blake resigned from the post just a few months after being hired.

Camacho said CPA still needs to fill in its accounting manager and deputy comptroller positions, which are both being advertised.

"We have good candidates...and hopefully in two weeks' time, we can fill the posts," he said.

Camacho described the salary offers for key CPA management positions as "unrealistic" and "detrimental" to finding quali-

fied individuals.

In the opinion of the CNMI Public Auditor, only three positions at CPA are exempted from the \$50,000 salary cap law of the government: the executive director position, comptroller, and the legal counsel.

However, the board has set a maximum of \$70,000 annual pay for the top management post, which is now occupied by Camacho.

An independent contract for three positions was earlier proposed to the CPA board, which has yet to make a decision on the matter.

Camacho, who is also an engineer, is serving two positions at CPA besides overseeing the three main airports and three seaports.

He said this concern has been raised to the Legislature but no measure has been acted upon.

Camacho specifically asked senators in a recent meeting that CPA be exempted from the salary cap law and let its board decide on the salary of its employees since it is a self-generating agency.

He emphasized that a major reason for the high turnover of personnel in management positions is the "unattractive" salary rates being offered by CPA.

Camacho said CPA, which is just beginning to see an improvement in its bond ratio status, is at risk of facing another challenge if it continues to lose key financial people for its operations.



Camacho

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Tinian donation center now permanently closed

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

With no help forthcoming from the local government, the Helping-Hands Books & Donation Center on Tinian has decided to close down permanently.

Run by an American poet and essayist who wants to be simply called maia, the center has been operating for the past three years on the island, providing not only books, toys, and clothing but also advice to budding writers and book lovers.

maia officially closed the center on Tuesday, Aug. 4, because "both the mayor and his opponent have ignored my pleas to keep it open, as I can't afford the rent for the building."

Half of the duplex facility will have to be rented out since its owner could no longer afford to keep it rent-free, especially in these hard economic times, maia said.

She said building owner Edu Villagomez has been letting her use the building for free the past two years.

"If it weren't for him and Connie Manglona giving me a free place to run the center for the past three and a half years, there never would have been a donation center, or the thousands of free books given away to all the children of Tinian,"

maia wrote in an e-mail.

She said she will have to move the donation center "to a place where a mayor will want to help his people."

She is now looking for a place where the local government will welcome such a center, "instead of making it impossible for me to keep it going, as they've done here." maia is looking at possibly

moving to Hopi Rez (Arizona), Sri Lanka, Guam, or the Philippines. As soon as she finds an alternate site, she will have to take everything with her.

This is because she could not even get the American Red Cross to take the donated clothing, to save for the next typhoon emergency, maia said.

Since the center opened in 2006, the needy and book lovers

on Tinian have had the chance to receive gift items and free books each Christmas when maia plays Santa.

When she leaves, she said there will be nowhere on the island for people to get books, even to buy them, much less for free.

She appreciates those who have supported her and wishes the powers that be would be

kind and caring also.

Some of maia's works include *A Mother's Guide to Clean-Living in a Dirty Universe*, *On the Path to Matera*, *In Who's Name?*, *Naked Apes and Their Designer Duds*, *In Medusa's Mirror* and *first person plural, im.perfect*. These are now available for free to all in e-form or hard copy. Maia's website is <http://www.saysmom.com>.

Fund: Processing of retirement refunds will now take 90 days

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

To further stabilize the Retirement Fund's investments, the board of trustees has approved a new system that extends the processing of refunds applications to 90 days.

Fund administrator Mark A. Aguon on Monday informed all department and activity heads

that the new guideline was due to the improper re-employment of some members.

"Certain individuals have been seeking the withdrawal of their employee contributions, only to almost immediately seek and receive re-employment with the Commonwealth government," Aguon said.

He said this practice not only frustrates the investment pur-

poses of the Fund but violates provisions of the law.

According to 1 CMC 8365, as amended by Public Law 13-60, members are not allowed to become re-employed with the government within six months after receiving a contribution refund, regardless of class membership with the Fund.

"[It] frustrates the purpose of CMC 8365(b) which has

discretionary withholding of refunds for three months after receipt of application for refund," Aguon said.

As such, in order to help address the fiscal instability of the Fund, facilitate an orderly administrative structure, and research available agency records, all applications for refunds of employee's contribution shall be processed no sooner than 90 days after receipt of the application, he said.

Aguon encouraged employees to disseminate the information among their employees as soon as possible.

Early last month, the board of trustees adopted a resolution stopping the payment of contribution refunds to members starting Sept. 1, 2009, after learning that the Fund has already fallen below 40 percent of its total funded accrued actuarial liabil-

ity in the last five years.

Currently, the Fund is funded only 39 percent and has consistently failed to reach a level of 50 percent since fiscal year 2000.

The new 90-day processing of refunds applications are applicable to July 8 to Sept. 1 applicants and are subject to board approval.

The Fund disclosed that it has received a total of 939 applications for refunds since 2007 to July 2009.

It was also uncovered that there were 59 individuals from the approved refund claimants who were re-employed back with the government; five of them re-entered government service less than the six-month separation period mandated by law.

An estimated over \$30,000 can be recouped by the Fund from these five individuals.



Aguon

Sept. 15 deadline for FY09 purchase requests and RFPs

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
HaidEE_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Government agencies and offices have until Sept. 15 to submit Fiscal Year 2009 purchase requisitions, contracts and information to bid/request for proposal requests to the Department of Finance's Division of Procurement and Supply.

Vivian M. Lizama, acting director of the Division of Procurement and Supply, told government department and activity heads on Tuesday that the deadline is established to allow the division to perform the processing requirements before the end of FY 2009.

The current fiscal year ends on Sept. 30.

"All purchase requisitions, contracts and ITB/RFP requests submitted after Sept. 15, 2009 will be returned to the requesting department/agency to re-submit in the next fiscal year," Lizama said in an Aug. 4 memorandum.

Capital improvement projects are not affected by this deadline.

Lizama also reminded gov-

ernment offices that all open accounts—federal or local—expire on Sept. 30.

Those with questions are encouraged to contact Lizama's office at 664-1500.

A current example of government's invitation to bid is the purchase of 17 desktop computer systems for the Coastal Resources Management. CRM also has a current RFP for "needs assessment and impact report for Saipan beaches and lagoon usage."

Another ITB has been issued for the purchase of five laptop computers, one 37-inch LCD TV, two digital editing tablets and miscellaneous network and miscellaneous need for the Department of Public Health.

The Office of the Governor and the Division of Procurement and Supply also issued an ITB for the supply and installation of typhoon shutters for the buildings of the CNMI Criminal and Justice Planning Agency, the Passport Office and the Department of Public Works. Another ITB was issued for the roof repair on CJPA's building.

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Palau deal close for Uighur Guantanamo detainees

KOROR, Palau (AP)—Some Chinese Muslims still detained at Guantanamo Bay have overcome reservations about being sent to the remote Pacific nation of Palau, and a final deal on their relocation was close, a lawyer for two of them said Wednesday.

The Uighur detainees met with U.S. State Department officials on Monday and told the diplomats they are now willing to move to Palau, said lawyer George Clarke, who took part in the talks.

Clarke told The Associated

Press by telephone that "more than four and less than all" of the 13 Uighurs had agreed to go, overcoming previous fears that the tiny island nation would not be able to protect them from China, which considers them separatists.

Once a deal is struck, it is expected to take weeks to organize the Uighurs' transfer.

Palau in June offered to take the 13 detainees—a major step toward the Obama administration's goal of finding new homes for terrorist suspects and

other prisoners captured during the Afghan war who have been cleared of wrongdoing but cannot go home for fear of ill-treatment.

But the island state's President Johnson Toribiong told the AP in June that some of the men were hesitant because of concerns about China, which has demanded they be sent home for trial. U.S. officials have said the men could be executed in China and have refused to send them there.

The 13 Uighurs, Turkic Muslims from far western China, have been held by the United States since their capture in Afghanistan and Pakistan in 2001. The Pentagon determined last year that they were not "enemy combatants," but they have been

in legal limbo ever since.

The U.S. has described a lack of resettlement options for dozens of such inmates who can't be returned to their homelands as an obstacle to emptying the Guantanamo prison.

Mark Bezner, the top American official in Palau, confirmed the State Department was putting together a document spelling out the terms of the Uighurs' stay in Palau.

"I expect to have it soon," he said. "We'll be discussing it with the Palauans and then it can be relayed to the Uighurs' attorneys."

Once the men have signed it, Congress will be notified of the pending transfer. If no congressional objections are raised, the men will be cleared

for their move after 15 days, Clarke said.

A senior U.S. official told The Associated Press that a deal on sending the Uighur detainees to Palau was "close but not yet done." The deal could come soon if there are no last-minute hitches, the official said on condition of anonymity because no official announcement had been made.

Ngiraibelas Tmetuchl, special assistant to Toribiong, said Palau's government so far had not been notified of the developments.

"That's news to me," he said. "We will be expecting a note from the U.S."

Clarke said his clients, Dawut Abdurehim and Anwar Assan, had been holding out hope that

another country with an established Uighur population would be willing to take them in.

"That's been a sticking point," Clarke said. "It's gotten to the point where they've realized that other countries are not (a) reliable" option.

While there are no Uighurs in Palau, there is a Muslim population of more than 400—most of them Bangladeshi workers—and two mosques.

Clarke said a key issue to the detainees is whether they will be allowed to travel after being settled in Palau. His clients hope to one day make the Hajj, or holy pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

Palauan citizenship is strictly hereditary, so the Uighurs will not be eligible for Palauan passports.

Korean dance troupe to perform Sunday night at the World Resort

Free admission to the public

By **NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.**
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Park Si Jong Dance Company from Cheong Ju, South Korea, will perform again for the CNMI, this time at the Saipan World Resort on Sunday night starting at 5pm. Admission is free.

Titled "Impression on Dance," the show is sponsored via the Chungbuk Province Selected and Art, Literature and Intelligence Fund and supported by the Marianas Visitors Authority, Mayor of Saipan, Saipan World Resort, Mode Tour, Asiana Airlines and Saipan Poongmulpa.

The group, composed of 16 seasoned cultural dancers and staff, will be arriving tomorrow. The dancers are Hong Ji Young, Jungun Ho, Kim Jisung, Ha Chaewon, Yun Mi Ra, Hwang Na Rae, Kim Se Hee, Leebi Chye, Nam Ki Yeon, Bae Hee Sun, and Ahn Sun Young.

They will be accompanied by the manager of the Cheongju City Dance Company, Lee Hak Hyun.

Lee is a member of the Federation of Artistic and Cultural Organization of Chungbuk.

The show was originally set for Aug. 8 but organizers decided to move it to Aug. 9.

The group had its first perfor-

mance on Saipan in 2007.

The show is in commemoration of the 64th Korean Independence Day and the completion of the Korean Center on Saipan.

In a pre-performance message, the dance company's art director and choreographer, Park Si Jong, said that Saipan and Korea have a lot in common.

"Saipan became now one of the world famous resorts but I know there used to be sufferings from wars in it like Korea," she said.

Park said Saipan has overcome its sufferings, showing its message of peace and prosperity to the world.

"This is the reason I feel this performance is valuable [and] worthwhile to see today," she said.

She said the dance company would do its best to contribute to the exchange of cultures between Saipan and Korea.

Musical dances that will be featured in the show include Eum Pung Nong Woi (expressing the atmosphere of the moonlight), Tae Pyong Moo (an expression of people's wish for the well-being and peace of a nation), Chae Sun Hayng Moo (a dance usually performed during a festival), the delicate traditional dance Sal Puri and the romantic Wind Flower.

Friday Mass for late Cory Aquino

The Diocese of Chalan Kanoa will celebrate a memorial Mass in honor of the late Philippine President Corazon Cojuangco Aquino on Friday, Aug. 7, 2009, at 7:30pm at the Mount Carmel Cathedral.

Bishop Tomas A. Camacho will preside over the Mass, con-celebrated by the clergy of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa.

In a spirit of solidarity and support to the Filipino community living in the Commonwealth, especially those who have served and continue to serve the people of God through the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa, Bishop Camacho is inviting everyone to join him and the clergy in prayer for the late Corazon Aquino through this Eucharistic celebration. (PR)



In this Sunday Aug. 17, 2008 file picture, cancer-stricken former Philippine President Corazon Aquino smiles to friends inside the church at the Ateneo de Manila University in suburban Quezon City, Philippines.

Legal Notice

If You Are a Licensed Driver or Own a Motor Vehicle A Proposed Class Action Settlement May Affect Your Rights

Para Una Notificación En Español, Llame O Visite Nuestro Website www.dppasettlement2.com

There is a Proposed Settlement in a class action lawsuit, *Fresco, et al. v. R.L. Polk & Co. and Acxiom Corp.*, Case No. 07-cv-60695-JEM, in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida.

However, you will be responsible for your attorney's fees and expenses.

The Proposed Settlement affects a "Class," or group, of people that may include you. This is just a summary of your rights. To get complete information you should visit www.dppasettlement2.com or call 1-866-397-0925.

What Are My Legal Rights?

If the Court approves the Proposed Settlement, you will be bound by the Court's decisions. You will not be able to sue the Defendants for the claims that were made in this lawsuit, including claims for statutory liquidated damages. But you will be able to sue for actual money damages in an individual lawsuit. For full information about the rights you are giving up, please read the *Notice of Proposed Class Action Settlement*.

You Can Tell the Court if You Do Not Like the Proposed Settlement.

To object or comment, you must send a letter that is mailed and postmarked no later than October 9, 2009, as outlined in the *Notice of Proposed Class Action Settlement*. If you employ a lawyer to prepare the objection, then the objection letter must include a section detailing the lawyer's experience with class actions. The section must specifically list the capacity in which the lawyer participated in each class case (e.g. plaintiffs', defendants', or objectors' counsel) and the outcome of each class case. If the lawyer represented objectors in a class case, then the lawyer must detail the disposition or effect that the objection had on each class case. Please note that even if you employ a lawyer to prepare the objection, you must still personally sign the objection letter. By signing the objection letter, you are attesting that you discussed the objection with the lawyer and have fully reviewed the objection letter.

Will the Court Approve the Proposed Settlement?

The Court will hold a Final Approval Hearing on December 7, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. to consider whether the Proposed Settlement is fair, reasonable, and adequate and to consider the motion for attorneys' fees and expenses. If comments or objections have been received, the Court will consider them at this time.

For more information on the Proposed Settlement, and to get a copy of the *Notice of Proposed Class Action Settlement*, call 1-866-397-0925, visit www.dppasettlement2.com, or write DPPA Settlement Administrator, c/o The Garden City Group, Inc., P.O. Box 9000, #6520, Merrick, NY 11566-9000.

What Does the Settlement Provide?

The relief provided is injunctive. This means that the Defendants have agreed to design, implement, and maintain specific, substantial procedures to enhance compliance with the DPPA when they obtain, use, or disclose information regulated by the DPPA. There will be no monetary recovery for Class Members. However, if you have actual money damages, you can file a lawsuit on your own.

Who Represents Me?

The Court has appointed attorneys to represent the Class. Class Counsel will request that the Court award attorneys' fees and expenses in an amount not to exceed \$7.5 million. You may hire your own attorney, if you wish.

1-866-397-0925

www.dppasettlement2.com

NMC Foundation launches 2-year scholarships

In its ongoing effort to advance higher education opportunities for CNMI students, the Northern Marianas College Foundation has announced a scholarship program for NMC students pursuing an associate degree at the college.

"The Foundation Board has been working extremely hard to ensure that we make these scholarship funds available in time for the Fall 2009 semester," said NMC Foundation president Ben Babauta. "Given the economic difficulties that many families are experiencing at this time, we hope many students apply and take advantage of this financial opportunity."

The NMC Foundation Scholarship program aims to provide recipients \$625 per semester for up to four semesters or up to the completion of an associate's degree, whichever is sooner. The college offers associate's degrees in business administration, liberal arts, nursing, natural resource management, criminal justice, and hospitality management.

The NMC Foundation is a non-profit organization whose goal is to raise funds to support the Northern Marianas College, the CNMI's lone post-secondary educational institution. The organization is composed of individuals who are dedicated and committed to ensuring that CNMI students receive the utmost support in pursuing their educational goals.

"In addition to the work of the NMC Foundation board, it's also important to acknowledge the generosity of many donors who have made this scholarship pro-

NMC hosts free information session today

The Northern Marianas College will be hosting a free all-day information session today, Aug. 6, at the NMC Student Center in Building J at the NMC As Terlaje campus. Individuals can attend the all-day event at anytime between 9am to 7pm.

Those interested in furthering their education and advancing their professional careers are encouraged to attend the event and meet with representatives from the different degree and certificate programs, who will be available to answer questions.

Counseling, financial aid, admissions, and other NMC staff will be available to answer questions and to assist in the admissions and financial aid process.

Those who attend the event qualify to have their application fee and their placement test fees waived for the upcoming Fall 2009 semester—a savings of about \$75.

CONTACT INFO

Office of Admissions and Records
Tel: 234-5498 Ext. 1528
Web: www.nmcnet.edu

The college offers several degree and certificate programs, including a bachelor of science degree in elementary education, associate degrees in business, liberal arts, nursing, natural resource management, criminal justice, hospitality management, and more. Moreover, it offers short-term certificate programs in different vocational, academic, and professional areas.

This free information session is open to everyone, including high school graduates, high school students and their parents, government and private sector employees, international students, and members of the general public who are interested in learning more about the programs at NMC.

For more information, contact the Office of Admissions and Records at 234-5498 ext. 1528, or log on to www.nmcnet.edu. (NMC)

CONTACT INFO

NMC's Financial Aid Office
Tel: 234-5498 Ext. 1527
Web: www.nmcnet.edu

gram possible," said Babauta.

The scholarships are based on merit and financial need and will be awarded to the recipient on the bases of the candidate's community involvement, academic background, letters of recommendation, and a written essay. An interview may also be required.

To be eligible, a student must be a U.S. citizen (or green card holder) and a CNMI resident for the past three years; be accepted and enrolled as a full-time student at NMC; have a high school or college cumulative GPA of

2.00 or better; and, be able to demonstrate financial need.

If selected to receive the scholarship, the applicant must also sign an agreement stating that he or she will work in the Commonwealth after graduating from the Northern Marianas College for a period twice as long as the period for which the applicant received the NMC Foundation Scholarship.

The NMC Board of Regents recently announced the launch of a scholarship program that provides financial assistance for students pursuing a bachelor's degree in education at NMC.

The deadline for submitting applications for both the NMC Foundation Scholarship and the Board of Regents Scholarship is August 21, 2009. (NMC)

sired. Must not have problem(s) and have good moral character.

For more information, call Ruth Coleman at the Office Of Military/Veteran Affairs at 664-2650. (PR)

EMO maintains high surf alarm

A large west swell will continue to produce hazardous surf on west facing reefs through late Thursday night.

The high surf advisory remains in effect until 6am Friday.

High surf and dangerous rip currents will affect exposed reefs and beaches. Expect hazardous surf of 8 to 10 feet on west facing reefs through late Thursday night.

Today, southwest winds will be 15 to 20 knots, with wind waves of up to 3 to 4 feet and west swell of 7 feet.

The CNMI Emergency Management Office is strongly advising the public to avoid venturing near exposed reefs and beaches, avoid venturing near exposed reefs and beaches, especially those along west facing reefs as rip currents will be life threatening. (EMO)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Aug. 6, 1999

Worst may be over for NMI—economist

Citing improvements on the island's gross revenue and gross business receipts, the worst of economic decline is probably over for the CNMI, according to Wali M. Osman, vice president and regional economist of Bank of Hawaii. Osman explained: "We are literally at the trough of the cycle. But the question is when do we get out of the trough and how rapidly?" With the changes in the region's economy, Osman believes that the Northern Marianas may find it hard to recover from the present economic slump. For one, the garment industry, which sustained the island's economy during the crisis, has already reached its maximum capacity.

Legislators to US Congress: Probe Stayman too

Former Insular Affairs Director Allen P. Stayman must be investigated for his possible involvement with Interior official David North's on-the-job political campaign, local lawmakers said yesterday. This move could also help shed light on the series of probe by Office of Insular Affairs—through a private investigator hired and paid for by the federal government which was directed against the Northern Marianas, according to Senate Floor Leader Pete P. Reyes. He raised the possibility that Stayman might have aided North to get information about the island that would be used against some Republican leaders who are known to be sympathetic to CNMI.

Aug. 6, 2001

Police official selling smut?

Lt. Pete W. Onni, the Department of Public Safety's intelligence chief, is being linked to an adult shop business selling pornographic materials and sex toys on Saipan's red-light district in Garapan. The police lieutenant admitted being one of the new owners of Akira's Adult Shop but said the store immediately closed down after he and his partners purchased the business from a Chinese trader, reportedly last month. "It's been closed for over a month now," Onni said. Onni made the statement as he denied any involvement in the government's anti-prostitution campaign.

Hotels feel the pinch of low visitor arrivals

Seven of the 10 major hotels on the island have admitted to feeling the pinch of the economic slowdown, saying that the crisis has adversely impacted their revenues in the last three years. Reports circulating around the Commonwealth's hotel industry claimed at least six hotels have been toying with the idea of filing for bankruptcy. But industry leaders said most of the hardly-hit hotels have taken alternative steps to forego complete closure. These include cost-cutting measures with majority of the hotels resorting to downsizing their operations to defray operational expenses.

Aug. 6, 2002

9 crimes a day, safe or not?

Virtually everyday for the last seven years, an average of nine victims have complained about being burglarized, robbed or being taken advantaged of by lawless elements in the community. According to statistics shared by the Department of Public Safety, a total of 24,984 cases of vandalism, robberies, burglaries and other forms of theft have been reported to authorities from June 9, 1995 until July 31, 2002. This translates to an average of at least nine crimes being committed against residents, tourists or establishments in the Commonwealth daily—though the figures only speak of those reported to DPS and exclude those that never make it to the police blotter.

No need to panic, govt in good fiscal shape—Heinz

A meeting between House leaders and Department of Finance officials has convinced lower chamber lawmakers that the \$18 million projected deficit is a red herring that is partly untrue and that the government is, in fact, in much better shape than what the administration is painting it to be. That said, the House of Representatives still wants the Babauta administration to proceed with the cost-cutting measures that were outlined in the letter that acting Gov. Diego T. Benavente had sent to lawmakers last Friday. This puts the House directly opposite the stance taken by the Senate, which rejected Benavente's decision to invoke his emergency powers under the Planning and Budgeting Act so he could impound all government funds, including that of the Legislature, Judiciary and municipalities.

Air Force recruiter will be on Saipan

Master Sgt. Dayne C. Thomas will be on Saipan on Aug. 12-13, 2009, at the Office of Military and Veteran Affairs, from 12pm to 3pm on both days, for those who are interested in hearing

about the great opportunities the U.S. Air Force has to offer and how one can join.

He is looking for qualified men and women between the ages 17-27. A high school Diploma is de-

sired. Must not have problem(s) and have good moral character.

For more information, call Ruth Coleman at the Office Of Military/Veteran Affairs at 664-2650. (PR)

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

The spectacle in Tehran

Borrowing a page from Stalin's Russia, Iran's increasingly wobbly regime has embarked on a contemptible spectacle of show trials as a means of punishing opponents who dared question the disputed June 12 elections. The idea is not only to humiliate the more than 100 figures—including prominent former politicians and high-ranking government officials—who were herded into court Saturday on trumped-up accusations of threatening national security, a charge that potentially carries the death sentence. It is also to send a chilling message to others who would challenge the regime's already shaky authority. As the chief prosecutor warned, anyone who questions the legitimacy of the trials may be arrested.

Like the Moscow show trials of the 1930s, the mullahs' sham display of "justice" in Tehran over the weekend featured disoriented-looking defendants using stilted language to "confess" to seeking to destabilize the regime at the behest of Western powers. As in the Moscow show trials, incredulous colleagues, relatives and allies of the accused have watched, stunned, as people they know well have made public pronouncements in words that are clearly not their own. And as in the Moscow show trials, no one is immune: Among those accused in the rambling, manifesto-like indictment is Mohammad-Ali Abtahi, a reformist former vice president; Shirin Ebadi, the Iranian Nobel laureate; and Maziar Bahari, a Newsweek journalist who, brought out to speak to reporters covering the trial, asked forgiveness from the Iranian people for what he described as the media's supposed role in promoting a "velvet revolution."

The "confessions," almost certainly produced under duress, are meant to frighten the community of Iranian reformers, up to and including top-ranking figures such as former Presidents Mohammad Khatami and Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, as well as Mir Hossein Mousavi, the opposition candidate whose official defeat at the polls in June triggered street protests that left at least 20 dead.

Having miscalculated the mood of at least a segment of the public by prematurely pronouncing seemingly lopsided electoral results in June, the regime now may compound its error by moving directly against those opposition leaders. The fundamentalist media loyal to the supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, is calling for their prosecution on charges of treason; a defiant Khatami, for his part, is publicly condemning the trials as a "show."

The trials have reinforced the image of a regime whose extremely modest tolerance for public dissent has shriveled as its own grip on power has weakened. Opposition protests continue in the streets of Tehran despite a crackdown by hard-line militias loyal to the regime. Public spats are reported between Mr. Khamenei and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the president who was sworn in Monday. These are dangerous days in Tehran, which only underscores the dilemma the Obama administration faces as it clings to a strategy of engaging Iran to contain its nuclear ambitions: Who is there to talk to?

(c) 2009, The Washington Post



The right time to go

By BARBARA F. WALTER
SPECIAL TO THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

Over the next 2 1/2 years, the U.S. is scheduled to withdraw all of its troops from Iraq. Americans, for the most part, are elated. The war in Iraq has been longer and costlier than almost anyone expected, and continued involvement seems unnecessary in the wake of the seemingly successful "surge." Iraqis—at least the Iraqi government and many Shiites—are also delighted. The withdrawal of American forces means the removal of a large occupying army, and with that, the chance to govern themselves. If the transition goes smoothly, everyone wins.

On the surface, this optimism seems justified. The Iraqi civil war that reached its peak in 2006 appears almost over. Violence is down, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and his Dawa Party are gaining in popularity, and al-Qaida's influence in the country has been marginalized. The Iraq of today is remarkably different from the Iraq of three years ago. Below the surface, however, is a different story.

Over the last 15 years, scholars have collected and analyzed data on the 125 or so civil wars that have taken place around the world since 1940. Two findings suggest that the outlook for Iraq is significantly more pessimistic than policymakers in the U.S. or Iraq would hope.

The first is what academics Paul Collier and Nicholas Sambanis call the conflict trap. A country that has experienced one civil war is much more likely to experience a second and third civil war.

That's partly because violence tends to exacerbate the political, economic and social problems that caused war to break out in the first place. But it is also because the first civil war often ends with no clear victor and no enforceable peace settlement. As soon as the combatants have rested and resupplied, strong incentives exist to try to recapture the state.

The second finding is what I call the settlement dilemma. Combatants who end their civil war in a compromise settlement—such as the agreement to share power in Iraq—almost always return to war unless a third party is there to help them enforce the terms. That's because agreements leave combatants, especially weaker combatants, vulnerable to exploitation once they disarm, demobilize and prepare for peace. In the absence of third-party enforcement, the weaker side is better off trying to fight for full control of the state now, rather than accepting an agreement that would leave it open to abuse in the future.

Iraq today faces both of these problems. No one group has been able to win a decisive military victory, even though violence is down from the high of 2006. Shiite groups continue to compete for power and influence, conflict continues among the Kurds and various factions over valuable oil fields in the north, and al-Qaida re-

mains ready to realign with the Sunnis should the opportunity arise. American soldiers have kept a lid on internecine fighting. But the recent increase in violence in some of Iraq's cities reveals that different groups began jockeying for position as U.S. troops left the cities in the hands of Iraqi security forces in June and in anticipation of complete U.S. withdrawal.

Right now, U.S. forces serve two important purposes. First, they signal to al-Maliki and the dominant Shiite population that a decisive victory over the Sunnis and Kurds will not be possible. They also signal to the less-numerous Sunni and Kurdish populations that both of these groups will be protected from Shiite exploitation over time. Remove U.S. forces and U.S. involvement in Iraq and you simultaneously embolden the Shiites while telling the weaker groups they must fend for themselves.

So what should the U.S. do? President Barack Obama has already said he plans to remove all combat troops by August 2010, with a remaining force of 35,000 to 50,000 "support troops" in place until the end of 2011. There is pressure to pull out all the troops on a faster schedule, but there is also talk of slowing the timetable for the removal of combat troops.

The U.S. needs to decide what outcome it is willing to live with in Iraq. It's likely that if the U.S. withdraws all of its troops on schedule, the strategic balance will dramatically shift in favor of the Shiites, and they will press for full control over the state. This, in turn, will probably goad the Sunnis and Kurds back to war, likely ending in a brutal Shiite victory and the establishment of an authoritarian state.

If the U.S. wants to avert this scenario, it will need to create real incentives for al-Maliki and the Shiites to offer a fair deal that transfers real political power to the Sunnis and Kurds by the 2011 deadline, and then it needs to help them enforce it over time. This would require that those 50,000 "support troops" remain in Iraq until the new political institutions are firmly established, something most experts believe will take an additional five to 10 years.

One of the most robust findings in the civil war literature is the importance of active peacekeepers in helping to implement compromise settlements. Between 1940 and 2002, if peacekeepers were present on the ground, settlements were implemented and civil wars ended. If peacekeepers were not present, they were not.

Peace in Iraq is possible. But the U.S. shouldn't fool itself into believing that it can get peace and stability in Iraq without committing significant military and nonmilitary resources to Iraq well beyond 2011.

Walter is professor of political science at the School of International Relations and Pacific Studies at the University of California, San Diego. She is the author of Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars and the forthcoming Reputation and Civil War: Why Separatist Conflicts Are So Violent.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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The Born Identity

Last month was not a good month for President Obama. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said the Senate would not vote on his controversial healthcare bill before the August recess, federal deficit spending has reached a record \$1.8 trillion, one major poll showed his approval rating had dropped below 50 percent, and a growing group of people question his citizenship and therefore his right to be President.

“Birthers” is the label used by those who want to relegate the latter group as a fringe element of society. Many complained last year when they noticed that Senator Obama would not place his hand over his heart while the national anthem was being played, and their concerns were heightened during the election when they noticed that he didn’t wear a U.S. flag pin on his lapel, until he finally put one on. When they wanted proof of his birth in Hawaii, he displayed his certificate of live birth on the Internet for all to view.

End of argument, right? Wrong. Last month the “Birther movement” (also tongue-in-cheek known as the Born Identity) gathered more momentum when it burst through the conservative blogosphere and back into mainstream controversy again because a federal judge in Tampa, Florida, denied Stefan Frederick Cook’s request to be rehired by Simtech Corporation, an Odessa-based military contractor. Cook claimed the Department of Defense pressured Simtech to fire him.

You see, Mr. Cook is also U.S. Army Major Cook, a reserve soldier who hired an attorney and was granted a request to not deploy to Afghanistan because he believes President Obama’s presidency is not legitimate because he is not a natural-born citizen of the United States. Cook believes he would be acting in violation of international law by engaging in military actions outside the U.S. under Obama’s command, which would subject him to possible prosecution as a war criminal.

Cook was represented by attorney Orly Taitz, who states that he is not refusing to go to Afghanistan because he is afraid to fight. In fact, Taitz says that Cook is ready to go today if it can be proved that President Obama is a legitimate commander in chief. She has dozens of other members of

the military waiting for her to represent them in similar cases.

Because of the recent surge in the number of inquiries about the birthplace of Obama, Hawaii Health Director Dr. Chiyome Fukino recently reissued a statement that he was born in Hawaii, and his certificate of live birth can be seen on the Internet. However, that’s not good enough for the Birthers who want to see the long form of the birth certificate that states the hospital and other details, because no hospital in Honolulu has any record of his birth.

I had not put much thought or time into the Birthers’ argument, but decided to do some research after it became a public issue again. Instead of finding more answers, my research only raised more questions. Obama’s mother, Stanley Ann Dunham, was born in Kansas in 1942, which makes her a U.S. citizen. She married Barack Hussein Obama Sr., a Kenyan native who was a British subject, whose citizenship status was governed by the British Nationality Act of 1948, which would have allowed Obama Jr. to have dual citizenship.

After Obama’s parents divorced, his mother later married an Indonesian businessman, Lolo Soetoro, and she moved with her son to Indonesia in 1966 or 1967. She became an Indonesian citizen and Obama was allegedly adopted by Soetoro, took on the name of his stepfather, and was registered in school documents as Barry Soetoro. His mother divorced for the second time and Obama moved back to Hawaii with his mother and half-sister at the age of 10. By the way, his half-sister Maya Soetoro-Ng was born in Jakarta, Indonesia, but some claim she also possesses a certificate of live birth from Hawaii.

The smoking gun in this whole scenario is not whether he was born in Hawaii or Kenya, but it may boil down to a trip Obama took to Indonesia and Pakistan in the summer of 1981 with a Pakistani friend, Wahid Hamid, who attended Occidental College with him. Obama fails to mention the trip in either of his books, but he did discuss the trip to Pakistan during a speech in San Francisco on April 6, 2008. Obama’s campaign press secretary, Bill Burton, confirmed the visit to Pakistan in 1981 on his return from Indonesia, so it is well established that he made the trip.

What makes this so interesting is that the U.S. State Department had

that dictates a frozen level for pay compensation doesn’t mean the policy is right, especially when the policy has never been tested in a court of law. I can assure the Board that the refusal to give frozen teachers equal and fair compensation for passing PRAXIS will eventually end up in court as frozen teachers leaving the system will surely be filing suits for back pay. It is truly in the BOE’s and PSS’ best interest to address the equal pay issue for frozen teachers now and not in court.

All frozen teachers should be receiving an annual bonus that is equal to the salary increases of the non-frozen teachers for passing PRAXIS. The one time \$2,000 payment to frozen teachers will never equal the compensation of the non-frozen teachers who will continue to receive a pay increase in every pay check for passing PRAXIS. There is also a policy that gives frozen teachers a \$2,000 bonus every two years for being frozen but it is based on the “availability of funds” which is a sad and ugly joke. It is going on five years since I received a bonus check. Now that PSS will be receiving stimulus money, something creative should be done to address the pay of the frozen teachers.

and/or employees do not qualify, will an employee still be allowed to stay and work without applying for a work visa?

On the required investment or annual revenue for employers to meet, if the employer’s business does not qualify to be able to file for their workers’ visa, is there any possibility for the small businesses to avail of the services of their current trusted employees? How about the non-immigrant small business owners—will they still be allowed to continue operating their businesses after Nov. 28, 2009?

How about the U.S. citizen children of non-immigrant parents, children who know no other home but the CNMI since birth, and who are dependent on their parents to take care of them and guide them to become good citizens of the CNMI—can they hope for their families to stay together?

ing together to produce ideas and priorities that will inform our nation’s homeland security policies for the next four years. DHS will produce a report based on the results of its review for submission to Congress on December 31, 2009.

You can read and rate actual DHS study group proposals, contribute your own ideas, and watch in real time as the best ideas “rise to the top” at <http://www.homelandsecuritydialogue.org>.

Please participate in this initiative, and help spread the word:

■ Forward this e-mail to five friends or colleagues whose ideas and perspectives should be part of this discussion. We have created a one-page summary of the National Dialogue for your ease of use.

■ Post a message or link on your blog, newsletter, corporate intranet, or e-mail list.

■ Block out 2-3 hours between August 3rd and August 9th to visit homelandsecuritydialogue.org, create a user account, and partici-

By RIK and JANEL VILLEGAS

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rik is a business instructor at NMC and Janel is a partner with BizResults, LLC (www.bizresults.org). They can be contacted at biz_results@yahoo.com.



Pakistan on a “no travel” list in 1981. Pakistan was under martial law at the time and Americans were prohibited from entering the country. A U.S. passport would not have allowed him to enter Pakistan, but the country accepted an Indonesian or British passport at that time. So the question is: If he could not use a U.S. passport, what passport was Obama offering when he passed through Customs and Immigration on his trip as a young college student?

There are only two possibilities: 1) If he used a British passport it would provide proof that he was either born in Kenya, as the Birther’s claim, or he accepted the citizenship of his Kenyan father; or 2) if he was traveling with an Indonesian passport, that would tend to prove that he was adopted by his Indonesian stepfather in 1967, and he relinquished whatever citizenship he held, American or British.

This bizarre supposition and its implications would be excellent fodder for a future Tom Clancy or Dan Brown novel. The President could summarily dismiss all of these accusations by simply showing his long form birth certificate, passports, visas, and college records (some believe he received aid as a foreign student). However, President Obama has refused to share the documents and he has purportedly spent over a million dollars with three law firms in an effort to thwart court attempts to reveal the documents. If he has nothing to hide, I hope for his benefit and the sake of the country that he shows the documents so the whole ordeal can be put to rest. Until he does, the Born Identity movement will not only grow larger, but it could threaten to derail his credibility with many of the American people.

There was also no mention of a policy for transitioning frozen teachers in the news article. Frozen teachers are clearly the most qualified teachers in the system and the most capable of being PSS’ future administrators. Frozen teachers should automatically be at the front of the line for promotions to administration but there is no policy for promoting employees within PSS.

Frozen teachers are right back where we started 10 years ago. We passed PRAXIS and most of us will have 10 more years of experience and a master’s degree but no pay increase. I’m sure the Board and anyone with common sense can see that something is very wrong with the present policy when it comes to compensation for frozen teachers and it is my humble and respectful request that you please revisit the policy to include fair compensation for frozen teachers.

Ambrose M. Bennett
*Former BOE Teacher Rep.
Kagman, Saipan*

And what of the Immediate Relatives, citizens of the Freely Associated States, and non-immigrants granted CNMI permanent residency before 1982, who comprise an important part of the workforce of these islands—do they stand a chance of gaining status here in the CNMI?

To all these questions the answer can be YES!—if we speak together in one voice, it would be loud enough for the U.S. Congress, the designated committees in Washington D.C., DHS, and President Obama to hear, listen, take notice, and then act on our request for improved status.

I will definitely be attending the assembly to be held on Aug. 9, Sunday, at 3pm at the Fishing Base in front of Kristo Rai Church. I want to be there and be counted!

Yho Villavicencio
As Lito, Saipan

Letters to the Editor

Frozen teachers

I read the article about PSS bonuses and it is good to see the board is finally acting on pay compensation for teachers, thanks to the federal government. The policy is truly a good thing for school chiefs and managers to get up to \$5K in bonuses.

However, there is a small group of teachers who are owed bonuses that were omitted and I am one of them. There was no mention of the “frozen teachers” in the article, which was disappointing. Our salaries are frozen and have been unfairly treated in compensation for passing PRAXIS. In addition, frozen teachers have also been denied their “bonus compensation” for being frozen the past four years. With frozen teachers being the “elite” and most valuable to the system, why are we being forgotten and even treated unfairly? Just because there is a policy

Stand up and be counted!

Pending the issuance of the regulations for the implementation of the federalization of immigration here in the CNMI, many of us seem to have common questions. I will try to enumerate some of those questions here.

Public Law 110-229 states that a guest worker can still stay and work within his job category up to the time of the validity of his CNMI permit or up to two years of the transition period’s effectivity of up to Nov. 27, 2011, whichever comes first. So if a guest worker’s CNMI permit expires on Jan. 01, 2010, will he still be allowed to stay after his CNMI permit expiration?

Employers, not employees, may apply for appropriate visas for their employees whose job categories qualify. If the employer cannot afford the application fees for each of their employees,

National dialogue

I would like to share this message from Quadrennial Homeland Security Review to all your readers for everyone to note that DHS is inviting everyone to participate in a national dialog to gather input and to weigh proposals on the national security review.

This is in line with the upcoming Aug. 9 assembly at the Garapan Fishing Base. The Aug. 9 assembly is one way of participating in the Quadrennial Homeland Security Review.

You’re Invited!

The National Dialogue on the Quadrennial Homeland Security Review begins today! Join the conversation at HomelandSecurityDialogue.org

Right now, thousands of stakeholders across the country are com-

pate in the Dialogue.

■ Follow us on Twitter at @qhsrdialogue to receive event reminders and updates.

This unique opportunity is hosted by the National Academy of Public Administration, a non-profit, non-partisan organization focused on effective government. Your participation, and that of stakeholders like you around the nation, will inform this important review of our nation’s homeland security strategy and priorities. Thank you in advance for joining the discussion and sharing your feedback.

See you online,






The National Dialogue Team

Carlito J. Marquez
Puerto Rico, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
				
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. West winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. West winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼78°	▲87° ▼78°	▲87° ▼78°	▲87° ▼78°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	▲85 ▼78
Palau	Cloudy	▲86 ▼77
Yap	Rain	▲87 ▼77
Chuuk	Cloudy	▲88 ▼76
Pohnpei	Rain	▲85 ▼77
Kosrae	Showers	▲89 ▼78
Majuro	Partly Sunny	▲86 ▼78

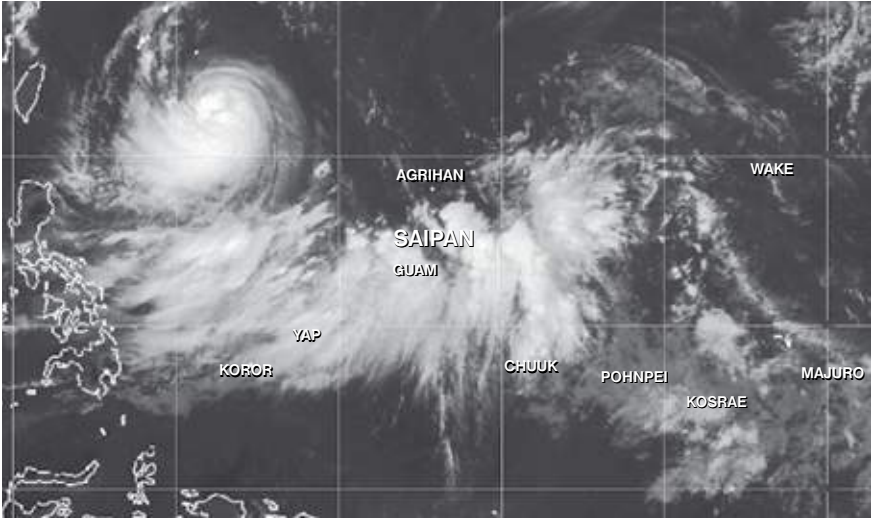
Around The Globe

Auckland	Sunny	▲59 ▼47
Beijing	Sunny	▲93 ▼73
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	▲90 ▼82
Honolulu	Showers	▲85 ▼77
London	Cloudy	▲75 ▼57
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲78 ▼64
Manila	Thunderstorms	▲83 ▼78
Melbourne	Showers	▲64 ▼57
Miami	Thundershowers	▲90 ▼79
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲83 ▼66
Osaka	Thunderstorms	▲88 ▼77
Paris	Cloudy	▲85 ▼68
Pusan	Cloudy	▲84 ▼77
Rome	Sunny	▲88 ▼66
Salem	Showers	▲80 ▼55
San Francisco	Partly Sunny	▲66 ▼55
Seoul	Partly Sunny	▲86 ▼75
Tokyo	Rain	▲85 ▼75
Washington, DC	Cloudy	▲89 ▼70

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
2:04 AM Today	Low Tide:	1.1 Feet
6:57 AM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
2:16 PM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet
9:02 PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

The monsoon trough extends east across southern Taiwan to Tropical Storm Morakot centered near 23N133E southeast across the Northern Marianas to a circulation east of Rota near 14N147E then east across Micronesia to another circulation west of Kwajalein near 10N166E. Numerous showers and isolated thunderstorms associated with Morakot are found within 200 miles of its center. Convergent westerly winds south of Morakot are generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms between 10N and 17N from 130E to 142E. Convergence associated with the circulation near Rota is producing scattered showers and few thunderstorms across the Marianas within 100 miles of a line from 16N142E to 11N146E and west of Guam within 150 miles of a line from 17N147E to 10N153E. The circulation near Kwajalein is producing scattered showers over the western Marshall Islands and Kosrae from 4N to 10N between 160E and 165E. An upper level low centered northeast of the Marianas near 22N150E is enhancing convection within 100 miles of 16N153E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:01 AM	6:45 PM
Friday	6:01 AM	6:45 PM
Saturday	6:01 AM	6:44 PM
Sunday	6:01 AM	6:44 PM
Monday	6:01 AM	6:44 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	6:51 PM	5:54 AM
Friday	7:28 PM	6:42 AM
Saturday	8:03 PM	7:30 AM
Sunday	8:38 PM	8:17 AM
Monday	8:38 PM	8:17 AM

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Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
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- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JULY 21, 2009

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP) C09597 11:50am 12:25pm 1, 7	ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN C09598 3:15am 3:50am 5, 6 C09312 1:20pm 1:55pm 6
ROTA (ROP)-GUAM C09597 12:50pm 1:20pm 1, 7	GUAM-ROTA (ROP) C09598 2:10am 2:40am 5, 6 C09312 12:10pm 12:40pm 6
SAIPAN-GUAM C09317 4:20am 5:10am Daily C09313 8:30am 9:20am Daily C09597 11:50am 1:20pm 1, 7 via ROP C09601 12:30pm 1:20pm 4, 5 C09603 3:30pm 4:20pm Daily C09605 6:30pm 7:20pm Daily C09599 9:30pm 10:20pm Daily	GUAM-SAIPAN C09598 2:10am 3:50am 5, 6 via ROP C09316 2:20am 3:10am 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 C09596 7:00am 7:50am Daily C09600 10:20am 11:10am 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 C09312 12:10pm 1:55pm 6 via ROP C09602 2:00pm 2:50pm 1, 4, 5, 7 C09604 5:00pm 5:50pm Daily C09606 8:00pm 8:50pm Daily
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT) C0941 5:30am 8:05am Daily NW99 6:05am 8:40am Daily NW78 9:00am 2:05pm Daily via NGO NW75 3:50pm 6:25pm Daily C0943 5:25pm 8:00pm Daily	NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN C0942 9:25am 1:55pm Daily NW76 10:00am 2:35pm Daily NW77 6:35pm 1:40am+1 Daily via NGO NW100 8:45pm 1:20am+1 Daily C0944 9:00pm 1:30am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX) OZ119 4:00am 6:40am 1, 3, 4, 6	OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN OZ120 9:55pm 2:20am+1 2, 3, 5, 7
SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO) NW78 9:00am 11:40am Daily	NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN NW77 9:10pm 1:40am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS) OZ608 3:20am 6:50am 1, 4, 5, 7	BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN OZ607 9:00pm 2:20am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN) OZ604 2:20am 6:00am 1 OZ604 2:50am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 OZ119 4:00am 11:20am 1, 3, 4, 6 via KIX OZ606 3:30pm 7:00pm 2, 4, 6, 7	SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN OZ605 9:00am 2:30pm 2, 4, 6, 7 OZ120 7:10pm 2:20am+1 2, 3, 5, 7 via KIX OZ603 7:40pm 1:10am+1 7 OZ603 8:10pm 1:40am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG) FM844 2:50am 5:40am 2, 6	SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN FM843 7:15pm 1:50am+1 1, 5
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN) CZ3008 3:30am 6:40am 2, 6	GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN CZ3007 7:30pm 2:40am+1 1, 5
SAIPAN-MANILA OZ604/701 2:20am 11:25am 1 via ICN OZ604/703 2:50am 11:25am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN C09603/933 3:30pm 8:40pm Daily via GUM C09599/PR111 9:30pm 7:45am+1 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 via GUM	MANILA-SAIPAN OZ702/603 12:45pm 1:10am+1 7 via ICN OZ702/603 12:45pm 1:40am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN PR110/C09596 10:00pm 7:50am+1 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM C0934/9596 10:55pm 7:50am+1 Daily via GUM OZ704/605 11:50pm 2:30pm+1 2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
SAIPAN-HONG KONG OZ604/721 2:20am 11:45am 1 via ICN OZ604/721 2:50am 11:45am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	HONG KONG-SAIPAN OZ724/605 12:30am 2:30pm 2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN OZ722/603 1:15pm 1:10am+1 7 via ICN OZ722/603 1:15pm 1:40am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily
Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123*	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125*	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily



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- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Global recession hitting Pacific hard, report says

By RAY LILLEY
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

CAIRNS, Australia (AP)—The global recession has cut economic growth and government revenues in vulnerable South Pacific island nations, forcing more people into poverty, a report to the 16-member Pacific Islands Forum by the regional powers Australia and New Zealand said Tuesday.

With some states running “unsustainable” budget deficits and struggling with “flat or declining growth” even before the downturn hit, the report warns that more will face destabilizing deficits if they fail to get spending under control.

The economic crisis will be a major focus of talks by leaders during the forum, which opened with a meeting of the region’s seven smallest island states Tuesday. The forum ends Friday.

The report, “Surviving the global recession: strengthening economic growth and resilience in the Pacific,” says the island nations were already badly hit by 2008’s hike

in international fuel and food prices, high inflation and falling foreign reserves.

The vulnerable small nations also are being hurt by lower prices and demand for their commodity exports, a slide in tourism incomes, a fall remittance cash from nationals overseas and significant drops in the value of offshore national trust funds.

The two regional powers, both big aid donors to South Pacific, said that while a global recession “is a challenging environment in which to implement reform programs,” slowing or stopping essential reforms will mean countries will become less competitive internationally and slower to benefit from a return to global growth.

All the island states have cut growth projections in 2009, with Fiji, Samoa, Tonga and Palau facing economic contraction this year.

Low or negative economic growth in most of the Pacific Island Forum states in the past decade has held back development, with only six of the 14 countries recording a slight improvement

in gross domestic output per person over the 10 years.

To fight the downturn, the report proposed that small Pacific states strengthen the role of the private sector, improve inefficient state-owned businesses, introduce more business competition and reduce the costs

to business of regulatory and legal controls.

At the same time it warned that fiscal stimulus packages that include tax cuts, salary increases and cash transfers could increase demand for imports and worsen current account deficits “while having a limited impact

on local job creation.”

Countries like Vanuatu that have undertaken economic reform and strengthened competitiveness are lauded for lifting growth to an annual average of 6 percent since 2004 — more than twice its average growth over the previous decade.

The Pacific Islands Forum comprises Australia, New Zealand, the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Marshall Islands, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.



TOURISM INTERNS

Marianas Visitors Authority student interns join managing director Perry Tenorio and the MVA staff they trained with for a commemorative photo on July 30, 2009, before their completion of the Workforce Investment Agency summer intern training program. Seated from left are research assistant intern Roseanna Sablan, Tenorio, administrative assistant intern Raquel Pelisaman, and administrative assistant intern Junella Norita.

MVA

Connaughton named to National Marine Sanctuary Foundation board

SILVER SPRING, Md.—James L. Connaughton, former chairman of the White House Council on Environmental Quality, and current executive vice president with Constellation Energy, was named the newest member of the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation board of trustees.

Connaughton played an instrumental role in former President George W. Bush’s historic decision to establish four new Marine National Monuments in the Pacific, protecting 330,000 square miles of coral

and marine habitat—the largest area of ocean conservation in the world.

These include: the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument in the Northwest Hawaiian Islands; the Mariana Trench Marine National Monument in the area of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; the Rose Atoll Marine National Monument in the area of American Samoa; and the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument.

“We are excited and very fortunate to add such a tremen-

dously distinguished and successful environmental expert to our board of trustees,” said Bob Talbot, chairman of the Board for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation.

“Jim is a knowledgeable and proven leader who shares our commitment and passion for ocean conservation and the need to support our national marine sanctuary system.”

Connaughton currently holds the post of executive vice president, Corporate Affairs, Public



Connaughton

and Environmental Policy at Constellation Energy. He is the former chairman of the White House Council on Environmental Quality from 2001-2009. In this capacity, he served on President Bush’s senior staff as senior envi-

ronment, energy and natural resources advisor, and as director of the White House Office of Environmental Policy.

A major component of Connaughton’s policy and management portfolio involved the development and implementation of a comprehensive national ocean policy, working closely with the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy. In this role, Connaughton

oversaw the development of the U.S. Ocean Action, which contained more than 80 high-level actions that the Executive Branch substantially completed over a three-year period, and he helped set the stage for equally comprehensive opportunities for action by the Obama Administration.

Prior to joining the Bush Administration, Connaughton was a partner in the law firm Sidley Austin, in its Environmental Practice Group, covering a wide range of environmental policy issues. He helped lead the development and implementation of the ISO 14000 series of international environmental management system standards.

Connaughton is a graduate of Yale University and graduated

second in his class, magna cum laude, Order of the Coif, from the Northwestern University School of Law.

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation is the private, non-profit partner to NOAA’s Office of National Marine Sanctuaries. The Foundation supports efforts to educate and motivate people on ways they can help preserve, protect and promote our nationwide network of marine sanctuaries for future generations to enjoy. The 14 sites within the National Marine Sanctuary System protect special places in the oceans and Great Lakes, from the Florida Keys to the Hawaiian Islands and from Lake Huron to the Gulf of Mexico. For more information, visit www.nmsfocean.org. (*Business Wire*)

ON THE NET

www.nmsfocean.org

Hawaii tourism eyeing Russian market

HONOLULU—The Hawaii Tourism Association has announced it has been successful in its goal to actively identify non-traditional markets that could be potentially lucrative for in-bound tourism for Hawaii.

“From the beginning, and one of the reasons why we started HiTA in the first place was because of overwhelming response that we have received after we did our initial survey. Some of the responses were quite predictable, while others were surprising,” said HiTA president Juergen Thomas Steinmetz.

According to Steinmetz, Russia has been identified as a market that could potentially bring in big business for Hawaii tourism. He said Hawaii can be accessed by the Russian market both through the mainland U.S., and also through Korea, Japan and with Hainan Air starting also through Beijing.

He added that the Russian market’s per day spending overseas is one of the highest of any tourism-spending nation.

That is why HiTA has sought the help of various organizations and entities, including the U.S. Department of Commerce Export Council.

“Embassies and Consulates in more than 85 locations are ready to assist Hawaii with data,

active support about Hawaii’s most important export, which is tourism,” adds Steinmetz, who has recently been selected as the chair of the subcommittee for tourism and member of the U.S. Department of Commerce Export Council for the U.S. Pacific Region.

Among HiTA’s initiatives in luring the Russian market, according to Steinmetz, is the organization’s upcoming participation in three important trade events in Moscow from Sept. 22-25, 2009. “One event is for the MICE (Meeting and Incen-

tive business), luxury travel and leisure travel,” the HiTA president said.

This initiative is certainly an opportunity for Hawaii’s tourism industry, Steinmetz said. “HiTA with the assistance of the Commercial Section of the US Embassy in Moscow invites Hawaii tourism business to team up.

Other new emerging markets have been identified and similar events are already planned in Singapore, India, Thailand, Poland, Italy, Germany, Hong Kong and South Africa.

HiTA is inviting industry members in Hawaii, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa to participate. Industry members should contact thomas@hawaiiitourismassociation.com or call 1-808-566-9900. (*PR*)

ON THE NET

www.hawaiiitourismassociation.com

PACIFIC BRIEFS

Subsistence farming helps Pacific cope

MELBOURNE, Australia (Radio Australia/PIR)—Tonga’s prime minister says the role of subsistence agriculture has been significant in getting Pacific Island nations through the global economic crisis. Dr Fred Sevele was speaking to a conference of the Lowy Institute in Brisbane, Australia. Subsistence agriculture is self-sufficient farming in which farmers grow enough food to feed their family. Crop decisions are made on requirements for the year ahead, not market prices. Dr Sevele says small island states are not as developed as many others economies, but in a way that helped them weather the global financial crisis.

Pacific island sailors released by Somali pirates

HONOLULU (Pacific Islands Report/PIR)—The German Press Agency reports that a cargo ship carrying a crew that includes 12 sailors from Tuvalu has been released by pirates off the coast of Somali. The pirates reportedly received a ran-

som of \$1.2 million before freeing the Hansa Stavenger and its crew of 24 on Monday. The ship belongs to German shipping company Leonhardt & Blumberg. The DPA reports that the ship was now expected to arrive at Mombasa, Kenya on Thursday. The ship’s crew includes five Germans, three Russians, two Filipinos, two Ukrainians and 12 persons from the South Pacific nation of Tuvalu. Crewmembers are expected to be sent home to their respective countries, DPA reports.

Tongan scholar plans democracy forum

MELBOURNE, Australia (Radio Australia/PIR)—A group of university staff and students from New Zealand are to visit Tonga later this month to distribute a booklet outlining basic democratic concepts. The 100 page booklet, in Tongan and English, has been prepared by Dr. Malakai Koloamatangi, a Tongan political scientist at Canterbury University. He says around 5,000 of the booklets will be distributed around Tonga at public meetings which will feature discussions about the new, more democratic system in the Kingdom.

Business

'Clunkers' rebates look likely for another month



Tony Balster, of Victory Auto Wreckers, writes Cash For Clunkers on a car after loading it to be towed from the Cash For Clunkers program at NorthSide Toyota Dealership in Chicago, Tuesday, Aug. 4, 2009.

WASHINGTON (AP)—Roadblocks disappearing, the Senate cleared the way Tuesday for a vote giving eager car buyers until Labor Day to cash in on rebates up to \$4,500 for trading in their gas-guzzlers for new, higher-mileage models.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid declared he had the votes to pass a \$2 billion "cash for clunkers" measure already approved by the House. It would replenish the all-but-exhausted \$1 billion pro-

gram and provide rebates for up to a half-million more Americans in the next month.

Despite reservations, Reid's GOP counterpart, Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, predicted his party would not block a vote and "the matter will be completed."

"I think the last thing any politician wants to do is cut off the opportunity for somebody who wants to get a rebate to buy a new automobile," said Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood, a former Republican

congressman from Illinois.

Senate passage would send the legislation to the White House for Obama's signature and guarantee there would be no interruption in the program that has sent buyers streaming into formerly deserted auto showrooms.

Republicans were still seeking a chance to amend the House version that would extend the program into September, but Democrats were confident the bill wouldn't be changed.

Spending inches up in June, despite income drop

WASHINGTON (AP)—As gasoline prices rose, Americans spent more in June than the previous month—despite falling incomes. For the rest of the year, economists expect falling wages and rising unemployment to act as a drag on spending.

Consumer spending is closely watched because it accounts for about 70 percent of total economic activity and has helped lift the economy out of previous recessions. While analysts expect the economy to grow in the second half of this year, consumers aren't likely to lead the way.

Americans boosted their

spending 0.4 percent in June, the Commerce Department said Tuesday, the second consecutive monthly increase. But adjusting for inflation, spending fell 0.1 percent, following a flat reading in May. Inflation-adjusted spending hasn't increased since February, the department said.

Personal income, meanwhile, dropped 1.3 percent in June, the eighth straight decline and steepest fall in four years. Incomes were inflated in May due to one-time payments from the Obama administration's stimulus program. But wages and salaries also fell 0.4 percent in June.

"The key message is that ... income remains weak" and consumers are likely to keep saving more, Paul Dales, U.S. economist at Capital Economics, wrote in a note to clients. "Under those circumstances, we expect spending to remain muted for some time."

Consumer spending may increase in July and August due to the government's "cash-for-clunkers" program, economists said, but will likely level off afterward. The program has spurred thousands of Americans to trade in old cars for newer vehicles.

Investors nudge rally forward with small gains

NEW YORK (AP)—Having sprinted higher for three weeks, the stock market is taking a break.

Investors made few big moves Tuesday after stocks rocketed 14 percent in just 16 days. The market closed with modest gains as many traders held their positions and looked toward the Labor Department's employment report on Friday.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose 34 points. On Monday, the blue chips jumped 115 points and the Standard & Poor's 500 index nosed above 1,000 for the first time in nine months.

Tuesday's mostly upbeat news helped prevent the mar-

ket's pause from turning into the type of slide that can follow big jumps. Analysts have been predicting stocks would idle after such a strong run, and some saw investor caution at work.

"There is a lot of concern that the market has moved too far too fast and that we've gotten ahead of the economy," said Brian Bush, director of equity research at Stephens Inc.

But the Commerce Department's report of an increase in consumer spending and the National Association of Realtors' report of a rise in pending home sales provided evidence that the economy could be stabilizing. And Caterpillar Inc. predicted

that cost cuts and other efforts will enable it to turn profits in the coming years even if the economy is slow to recover. Traders follow the world's largest maker of construction and mining equipment for signals about the overall economy.

The Dow rose 33.63, or 0.4 percent, to 9,320.19. The S&P 500 index rose 3.02, or 0.3 percent, to 1,005.65, while the Nasdaq composite index rose 2.70, or 0.1 percent, to 2,011.31. The gains left stocks at new highs for the year.

Stocks jumped more than 1 percent Monday on upbeat reports on manufacturing, housing and banking.

"We'll pass 'cash for clunkers' before we leave here," Reid said after Democrats lunched at the White House with Obama, who has vigorously pushed the extension as a much-needed

boost for the economy. Asked whether he had the votes to pass the measure, Reid replied, "Yes."

What Democrats don't have is much time. Obama said that de-

mand would drain the program of its initial \$1 billion by Friday. That's also the day senators are to embark on their month-long August recess.

Republicans said they were still negotiating with Reid for the chance to offer changes to the legislation. But McConnell said, "I would anticipate that the matter will be completed some time before the end of the week."

ON THE NET

Car Allowance Rebate System:
<http://www.cars.gov>

New Sony e-book reader \$100 cheaper than Kindle

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Electronic books are often mentioned in the same breath as Amazon.com Inc.'s Kindle digital reader. Now e-book rival Sony Corp. is determined to recapture consumers' attention with a smaller reader that's also \$100 cheaper.

On Wednesday, Sony is expected to announce that it will release the Reader Pocket Edition by the end of August. Like the Kindle and Sony's previous Readers, the Pocket Edition will come with an "electronic ink" display, which shows dark gray text on a lighter gray background. As the word "pocket" implies, its five-inch screen will be smaller than that on the Kindle and other Sony models.

Unlike other Readers, the Pocket Edition won't play digital music files, and it won't have a slot for a memory card to supplement internal storage that can hold 350 books.

It will retail for \$199, a third off the price of the basic Kindle model and about \$80 less than Sony's PRS-505 reader, which will be discontinued. Color choices include blue, red and silver.

The device is entering a small but growing market. U.S. e-book sales totaled \$113 million last year—up 68 percent from 2007 but still a fraction of the estimated \$24.3 billion spent on all books, according to the Association of American Publishers.

Steve Haber, president of Sony's Digital Reading Business Division, expects the Pocket Edition's price tag will lure new consumers who haven't wanted to shell out for such a device thus far.

And he's not worried that the Pocket Edition's chances for success will be diminished by the rising popularity of reading e-books on smart phones like the iPhone and BlackBerrys.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Mortgage aid program helping fraction of borrowers

WASHINGTON (AP)—The government's \$50 billion program to ease the mortgage crisis is helping only a tiny fraction of struggling homeowners, and a list released Tuesday showed which lenders are laggards. As of July, only 9 percent of eligible borrowers had seen their mortgage payments reduced with modified loans. And the first monthly progress report showed that 10 lenders had not changed a single mortgage. The report indicated that lenders such as Bank of America Corp. and Wells Fargo and Co. have lagged behind government expectations. Both banks received billions in federal bailout money.

Kraft Foods 2Q profit rises 11 percent

MILWAUKEE (AP)—Kraft Foods Inc. said Tuesday its second-quarter profit rose 11 percent even though its revenue slipped as the dollar's strength weighed down international sales. The earnings beat analyst expectations, and the company boosted its profit guidance for fiscal 2009, saying it expects

to see benefits from its recently completed restructuring, cost cutting and a focus on improving its products. CEO Irene Rosenfeld said the company is "hitting our stride" from its three-year turnaround plan as profits rise and products—even at higher prices—continue to woo shoppers.

Whole Foods sales and profit grow in 3Q

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)—Whole Foods Market Inc. said Tuesday that its fiscal third-quarter profit grew nearly 3 percent—beating expectations—as sales improved at the natural and organic grocery store chain. The Austin, Texas-based company said it earned \$35 million, or 25 cents per share, for the quarter, up from \$34 million, or 24 cents per share, in the same quarter last year. The results include a non-cash charge of \$6.8 million, or 3 cents per share, related to a settlement reached this spring with federal regulators over its acquisition of Wild Oats Markets Inc. It also includes a credit of \$5.8 million, or 2 cents per share, based on the way the company accounts for its inventory.

STOCK Portfolio

ASIAN MARKETS

AUSTRALIA
4,272.20
Down 41.70
(-0.97%)

HONG KONG
20,757.54
Down 38.89
(-0.19%)

TOKYO
10,252.53
Down 122.48
(-1.18%)

MANILA
2,886.96
Up 51.85
(1.83%)

SEOUL
1,559.47
Down 6.90
(-0.44%)

JAKARTA
2,323.20
Down 36.90
(-1.56%)

K. LUMPUR
1,179.88
Up 8.57
(0.73%)

SINGAPORE
2,611.29
Down 37.47
(-1.41%)

BANGKOK
634.99
Down 6.24
(-0.97%)

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW
9,320.19
33.63

NASDAQ
2,011.31
2.70

S&P
1,005.65
0.00

MONEY MARKET

Australian Dollar	1.1877
British Pound	0.5908
Canadian Dollar	1.0747
Chinese Renminbi	6.8308
Euro	0.6950
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7501
Indian Rupee	47.6720
Indonesian Rupiah	9,905.0000
Japanese Yen	94.9840
Malaysian Ringgit	3.4975
New Zealand Dollar	1.4880
Philippine Peso	47.8500
Singapore Dollar	1.4342
South Korean Won	1,224.4000
Swiss Franc	1.0607
Taiwan Dollar	32.6940
Thailand Baht	33.9950

In U.S. dollar terms

Source: Associated Press

Nation

Clinton, 2 journalists depart NKorea for US

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—His mission accomplished, former President Bill Clinton left Pyongyang early Wednesday accompanied by American journalists Euna Lee and Laura Ling after North Korean leader Kim Jong Il pardoned the women from their 12-year prison sentences.

Clinton and the two Californians were flying back to the U.S., his spokesman Matt McKenna said, less than 24 hours after the former U.S. leader landed in the North Korean capital on a private, humanitarian trip to secure their release.

Clinton has "safely left North Korea with Laura Ling and Euna Lee" and all three were en route to Los Angeles, where the journalists will be reunited with their families, he said.

The White House had no comment.

Their departure was a jubilant conclusion to a more than four-month ordeal for the women arrested near the North Korean-Chinese border in March and sentenced in June to 12 years of hard labor for illegal entry and engaging in "hostile acts."

Clinton's landmark trip to Pyongyang also resulted in rare talks with reclusive Kim Jong Il that state-run media described as "wide-ranging" and "exhaustive." The meeting was Kim's first with a prominent Western figure since reportedly suffering a stroke nearly a year ago.

North Korean media characterized the women's release as proof of "humanitarian and peace-loving policy." State media said Clinton apologized



In this photo released by China's Xinhua News Agency, the two female American journalists, in green and red shirts, just amnestied by North Korea go aboard a chartered plane carrying the homebound former President Bill Clinton, top, to leave Pyongyang, North Korea, Wednesday, Aug. 5, 2009.

on behalf of the women and relayed President Barack Obama's gratitude. The report said the visit would "contribute to deepening the understanding" between North Korea and the United States.

While the White House emphasized the private nature of Clinton's trip, his landmark visit to Pyongyang to free the Americans was a coup that came at a time of heightened tensions over North Korea's nuclear program.

The meeting also appeared aimed at dispelling persistent questions about the health of the authoritarian North Korean leader, who was said to be suffering from chronic diabetes and heart disease before the reported stroke.

Kim smiled broadly for a photo standing next to a towering Clinton. He was markedly thinner than a year ago, with his graying hair cropped short. The once-pudgy 67-year-old, who for decades had a noticeable pot belly, wore a khaki jumpsuit and appeared frail and diminutive in a group shot seated next to a robust Clinton.

North Korea accused Ling, 32, and Lee, 36, both of former Vice President Al Gore's Current TV media venture, of sneaking into the country illegally.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton urged North Korea last month to grant them amnesty, saying they were remorseful and their families were anguished by their detention.

late Tuesday EDT. They were flying directly to Los Angeles so the women could be reunited with their families.

The journalists were arrested after they allegedly crossed into the country from China earlier this year. They had been sentenced in June to 12 years of hard labor.

They were captured while on assignment to collect material for a report about trafficking of North Korean women into China.

ACROSS THE NATION

AP sources: Russian subs patrolling off East Coast

WASHINGTON (AP)—Two nuclear-powered Russian attack submarines have been patrolling in international waters off the East Coast for several days, in activity reminiscent of the Cold War, defense officials said Tuesday. U.S. Northern Command would not comment on the Russian submarines' movement. But in a prepared statement, Northern Command spokesman Michael Kucharek acknowledged the patrols and said the U.S. has been monitoring the two submarines. Two senior U.S. officials, however, said the submarines had been patrolling several hundred miles off the coast and so far had done nothing to provoke U.S. military concerns. The officials provided details on condition of anonymity in order to discuss intelligence reports.

Feds: NC terror suspect promoted jihad in home

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP)—A North Carolina man accused of leading a group plotting terrorism abroad was recorded saying "I love jihad" and preaching the virtues of fighting for Allah, federal authorities said Tuesday. A detention hearing for Daniel Patrick Boyd and six other suspects was packed with supporters, some derisively laughing when federal agents said they didn't know certain Arabic translations or details about the men. The shackled suspects nodded, smiled and tried to wave at family and friends in the courtroom while greeting the audience in Arabic with the common phrase "May peace be upon you." "May peace be upon you, also," many responded. Authorities played a recording gathered six weeks ago of the 39-year-old Boyd talking in his home to his family about protecting Muslims at all costs.

Up to 5 dead in Pittsburgh-area shooting

BRIDGEVILLE, Pa. (AP)—A gunman burst into an exercise class at a health club in suburban Pittsburgh on Tuesday night and started spraying bullets. A television station reported at least four people were dead, including the shooter, and a hospital reported another death later. Area hospitals were treating at least six other victims, including two in fair condition. KDKA reported the killings were at the L.A. Fitness Center in Bridgeville, a community of about 5,000 residents not far from downtown Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh International Airport.

NY police: Wrong-way crash driver was drunk, high

GARDEN CITY, N.Y. (AP)—A Long Island mother was very drunk, with an extra-large bottle of vodka in her car, and was smoking marijuana before she caused a wrong-way crash on a New York highway that killed her, her young daughter and six others, police said Tuesday. Diane Schuler's blood-alcohol level was more than twice the legal limit at the time of the July 26 wreck and she still had undigested alcohol in her stomach, police said. Blood tests also showed she had smoked marijuana 15 minutes to an hour before the crash, said Betsy Spratt, chief toxicologist for the Westchester County Medical Examiner. "With that level of alcohol ... she would have had difficulty with perception, with her judgment with her memory," Spratt said. "You start to get what we call tunnel vision."

Families, Gore asked Clinton to intervene

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Obama administration said Tuesday that the families of two reporters imprisoned in North Korea had asked former President Bill Clinton to travel to Pyongyang to seek the women's release.

A senior administration official said the families were joined in the request by former Vice President Al

Gore.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to provide details of events leading up to Clinton's trip, said the former president's mission did not include any discussions about issues beyond the release of Laura Ling, 32, and Euna Lee, 36, both journalists with Gore's Current TV

media venture.

The official also rejected an official report by the North Korean news agency which said that Clinton had delivered an apology about the incident to the country's ailing leader, Kim Jong Il.

Clinton left North Korea aboard a charter jetliner with Ling and Lee

Senate conducts historic debate on Sotomayor

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Senate held a history-making debate Tuesday on confirming Supreme Court nominee Sonia Sotomayor as the first Hispanic justice, with Republican opponents asserting she would bring bias to the bench and Democratic supporters saying she was a mainstream moderate.

There was little doubt that President Barack Obama's first high court nominee would be confirmed with bipartisan support as early as Thursday, but senators lined up to weigh in on her fitness for the bench anyway, with an eye toward the history books, the nation's burgeoning Hispanic electorate and perhaps the next Supreme Court battle.

"Judge Sotomayor's journey to this nomination is truly an American story ... (and) a reminder to all of the continuing vitality of the American dream," said Sen. Patrick Leahy,

D-Vt., the Judiciary Committee chairman. His opening remarks framed Sotomayor's confirmation as a step on the nation's still-evolving "path of inclusion" that began with the Bill of Rights and continued with the extension of voting rights to women and enactment of the civil and voting rights laws of the 1960s.

"She's a restrained, experienced and thoughtful judge who has shown no bias in her rulings," Leahy said.

Sen. Jeff Sessions of Alabama, the panel's top Republican and his party's pointman on Sotomayor, called her a devotee of an approach that heeds "the seductive siren call of judicial activism" and is contrary to the "classical underpinnings" of the nation's legal system.

"Judge Sotomayor's expressed judicial philosophy rejects openly the ideal of impartial and objective judging."

Obama and his allies brace for health care showdown

WASHINGTON (AP)—Bracing for an August showdown over health care reform, Senate Democrats and President Barack Obama declared themselves united Tuesday on their determination to enact a historic overhaul this year—ideally with Republican cooperation but without if necessary.

With his top domestic priority hanging in the balance, Obama summoned Senate Democrats to the White House for a luncheon cheerleading session on health care and other pending issues.

Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., who is leading bipartisan compromise talks on health care, said Obama told the senators he prefers a bill with support from both parties. But the president also said, "it may get to a point where we ... go in a different direction," Baucus added, referring to the possibility of a measure drafted to Democratic specifications.

Other Democrats said Obama men-

tioned no specific deadline for success in the bipartisan negotiations, and did not endorse a Sept. 15 date that officials have said Baucus declared last week. The Finance Committee chairman is under pressure from the White House as well as fellow Democrats to produce an agreement quickly.

House members left last week for their August recess, and senators follow this week. The lengthy recess, which finds lawmakers back home in their districts listening to constituents, could become a turning point in the divisive debate over the sweeping health care overhaul that Obama wants.

Voters are expected to make known their growing doubts about Obama's push. Among the emotional issues driving those doubts are fears about government-run insurance plans, a growing federal deficit, the impact on small businesses, abortion and end-of-life provisions.

Asia

Aquino laid to rest, hailed as moral leader

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Former President Corazon Aquino's body made its final journey through the Philippine capital Wednesday to be buried next to her assassinated husband in a culmination of grieving for the icon hailed as the example of moral leadership.

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, who was at odds with Aquino after she called Arroyo to resign because of vote-rigging allegations, paid a quick visit to the wake Wednesday morning upon her return from the U.S. and left before the church ceremonies and procession.

Over the last five days, hundreds of thousands of mourners have filed past her open casket. Family, friends and former aides crowded into the Manila Cathedral late Tuesday to eulogize the accidental opposition leader who led the 1986 "people power" uprising and drove away the 20-year repressive rule of Ferdinand Marcos.

Aquino, the 11th Philippine president, died Saturday at age 76 after a yearlong battle with colon cancer.

Her successors Fidel Ramos and Joseph Estrada, the latter deposed in a second popular uprising in 2001 on corruption allegations, together with East



Honor guards carry the casket of the late former Philippine President Corazon Aquino during her funeral march in Manila, Philippines on Wednesday Aug. 5, 2009.

Timor President Jose Ramos-Horta, attended Wednesday's requiem Mass.

Huge crowds chanting "Cory" lined Manila's rainy streets and walked behind the flatbed truck carrying Aquino's flag-draped coffin as the procession, lashed by winds, inched its way to her final resting place beside her husband, Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., at Manila Memorial Park. Yellow confetti showered the roads.

"We never saw any wrongdoing on her part," said housekeeper Edith Sabas.

At the simple white-painted tomb at the family mausoleum, interior designer Merly Querubin, wearing a baseball cap adorned with a yellow ribbon, said her country had two kinds of leaders. "One who we follow out of fear, and one who we follow out of respect. We have lost a leader so respected."

In a highly symbolic gesture, the late Marcos' two children paid their last respects Tuesday to the woman who toppled their father. It was unlikely, however, to reconcile the families' bitter rivalry.

Aquino's brother-in-law, former Sen. Agapito "Butz" Aquino, welcomed them at the wake saying the family had "no fight with the children" of Marcos.

Missile kills relatives of Pakistani Taliban chief

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—A suspected U.S. missile strike destroyed the home of a close relative of top Pakistani Taliban leader Baitullah Mehsud in a volatile tribal region, killing two people early Wednesday, two intelligence officials said.

The officials said the missile targeted the Akramud Din's home in South Waziristan, part of the lawless tribal region along Pakistan's border with Afghanistan and where Taliban and al-Qaida leaders are believed to be hiding.

The officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they are

not authorized to speak to media, did not say what relation the casualties were to Mehsud. They said one of the dead was a woman.

One of the officials said it was not clear whether Mehsud himself was in the house at the time, but that he was known to often visit.

The second official said agents were trying to get details about the second person who died in the attack.

Mehsud is the head of Tehrik-e-Taliban, a militant group blamed by Pakistan for the assassination of the country's ex-premier, Benazir Bhutto, in a

gun-and-bomb attack near the capital Islamabad in December 2007.

He is also accused of organizing dozens of other suicide attacks in Pakistan.

Pakistan's air force and the military have carried out several attacks targeting Mehsud, and the army has said it is preparing for a major offensive against Mehsud and his network in the tribal region.

Wednesday morning's attack is the latest in a series of suspected U.S. missile strikes in recent weeks targeting Mehsud.

Authorities have set up a cordon with a 17-mile (28-kilometer) radius around Ziketan, more than 300 miles (480 kilometers) west of Beijing, residents say. Calls to the town and provincial public security bureaus rang unanswered.

Public buses were pulled off the streets, and few shops were open, according to a food seller living in Ziketan, surnamed Han. The public have been told to disinfect their homes and shops, he said.

Plague patient 'near death' in remote Chinese town

BEIJING (AP)—Public buses were ordered off the roads of a remote Chinese town to control the possible spread of deadly pneumonic plague that has killed three people and seemed poised to claim a fourth victim Wednesday, residents and authorities said.

One patient hospitalized with the highly infectious lung disease was "near death" while another person was in serious condition, according to a notice from the health bureau of northwestern Qing-

hai province, where the stricken town of Ziketan is located. Seven others infected were "basically stable," the notice said.

Police have set up checkpoints around Ziketan, a farming town of 10,000 people in an ethnically Tibetan area, sealing it off to prevent the spread of the disease that can kill in as few as 24 hours if left untreated. Residents have reported that some people have tried to flee the town on foot, though it's unclear if they made it past the checkpoints.

Rights group asks Malaysia to drop protest charges

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Human Rights Watch appealed to Malaysia on Wednesday to immediately drop charges against dozens of people arrested during a mass rally against a security law that allows for indefinite detention without trial.

Twenty-nine people, including a 16-year-old, were charged Monday with taking part in an illegal rally and other related offenses. Some face up to three years in jail.

Police had refused to give a permit for Saturday's rally, which an estimated 20,000 people attended anyway in downtown Kuala Lumpur. They protested against the Internal Security Act, saying the law had been abused to jail government critics without trial.

Police crushed the opposition-led protest with tear gas and chemical-laced water and arrested almost 600. All have been released, but it is not clear if anyone else will be charged.

New York-based Human Rights Watch in a statement admonished Prime Minister Najib Razak, who took office in April, for the crackdown. It said all charges should be dropped.

"Prime Minister Najib took office promising to uphold civil liberties, and then his government turns right around and brutally attacks peaceful demonstrators," the group's deputy Asia director Elaine Pearson said. "Security forces are violating the rights of Malaysians to free expression and peaceful assembly."

But the government has insisted that the rally, the biggest in almost two years, was unlawful, and action had to be taken. All gatherings of three or more people need a police permit in Malaysia.

Federal police chief Musa Hassan was quoted by Wednesday's newspapers as saying that parents of 44 minors who were arrested may face charges for letting their children participate. A police spokesman, who declined to be named citing protocol, confirmed the comments.

Police are also investigating 11 people, including opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim and other top opposition politicians, for leading the rally. Musa said they could face charges for organizing it.

ASIAN BRIEFS

China says 83 formally arrested over Urumqi riot

BEIJING (AP)—Chinese police have formally arrested 83 people on charges including murder and arson in connection with last month's deadly rioting in the western region of Xinjiang, state media reported Tuesday. The arrests mark the first step in prosecuting those implicated in the violence that saw Muslim Uighurs attack members of China's dominant Han ethnic group. Police have said hundreds were detained following the rioting in Xinjiang's capital of Urumqi, which the government says killed 197 people and injured more than

1,700—the worst ethnic violence in China in decades.

Plane hits control tower at Thai airport, 1 killed

BANGKOK (AP)—A passenger plane skidded off the runway and crashed into a building after landing on the Thai resort island of Samui on Tuesday, killing the chief pilot and injuring at least seven people including foreign tourists. The Bangkok Airways flight landed in stormy weather and hit the airport's old air traffic control tower, which had been converted into a fire station, said Kanikka Kemawutanond, director-general of the Department of Civil

Aviation. The co-pilot and six tourists were hurt. "The heavy damage was at the front of the plane where the pilot was. It looks like he suffered from the impact," police Maj. Col. Sayan Sartsri said.

Strong quake jolts southern Japan

TOKYO (AP)—A magnitude-6.5 earthquake hit off Japan's southern coast Wednesday, the country's Meteorological Agency said. There were no immediate reports of damage or casualties. The quake hit at 9:18 am (0018 GMT) off the coast of Miyakojima, a southern island near Okinawa, at a depth of 18.6 miles (30 kilome-

ters). Miyakojima is located about 1,240 miles (2,000 kilometers) south of Tokyo. The meteorological agency said there was no fear of a tsunami. Atsushi Kawamitsu, a police official in Miyakojima, said police have received no reports of damage or casualties.

American on trial in Myanmar hospitalized

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—An American facing up to five years in jail for entering the house of Myanmar democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi has been hospitalized after suffering seizures, a week before a court is expected

to issue a verdict in his case. John Yettaw, 53, was admitted to Yangon's main hospital Monday, and his condition is improving, according to hospital sources who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals in the military-run nation. The U.S. Embassy confirmed he had been hospitalized. Yettaw's health problems—he has epilepsy—risk delaying trial proceedings already hit by protracted disputes over how many witnesses could appear for the defense. Most recently, judges said Friday they needed more time to sort through legal issues. Their verdict is now due next Tuesday.

World

Ahmadinejad sworn in as Iranian president

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was sworn in Wednesday for a second term in office as president of Iran, appealing for national unity and denouncing foreign interference in his inauguration speech before parliament.

Ahmadinejad took the oath and pledged to protect the constitution and frontiers of Iran but his inauguration speech was unusually soft-toned for the bellicose Iranian leader. He focused on foreign policy, saying he would make it “stronger and with more effective new plans.”

“I hereby swear by the almighty God to protect the system of the Islamic Revolution and the constitution, I will spare no effort to safeguard the frontiers of Iran” Ahmadinejad said.

He urged for unity and said: “We should join hands as we move forward to fulfill our goals.”

Ahmadinejad did not directly address the massive street demonstrations against his proclaimed election victory, but said his government would “resist any violation of law and interference.”

“We will not remain silent, we will not tolerate disrespect, interference and insults,” he said.

Top officials and clerics attended the ceremony, which was boycotted by opposition leaders and moderate lawmakers.

Iran’s opposition has claimed Ahmadinejad stole the vote in the June 12 presidential elections and there have been mass street protests that have shaken the country’s religious leadership. At least 30 demonstrators have



Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, delivers a speech during his swearing-in ceremony for his second term as president, at the parliament, in Tehran, Iran, Wednesday, Aug. 5, 2009.

been killed in the uprising.

Opposition groups have called protesters again to the streets Wednesday to coincide with the inauguration.

Hundreds of policemen are deployed around the parliament, while a subway station nearby was closed to the public.

The inauguration followed an official endorsement of Ahmadinejad’s presidency on Monday from Iran’s Is-

lamic religious establishment and the country’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Under the constitution, Ahmadinejad has two weeks to propose a government and offer a list of Cabinet members for approval in parliament.

Ahmadinejad also pledged to “uproot all sources of corruption” and move the economy forward, saying he believes he can “solve the problem of

unemployment.”

He made only a vague reference to the West and the U.S., which Ahmadinejad’s camp has accused of backing the street protests.

“Some countries have not recognized the elections or extended their congratulations. They do not respect the rights of other nations, yet they recognize themselves as the yardstick for democracy,” said Ahmadinejad.

Honduran generals defend exiling ousted president

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP)—Honduras’ military leadership defended its decision to force the ousted president into exile—a move the interim government has suggested was wrong even as it stands by the role of civilians in unseating President Manuel Zelaya.

Interim leaders insist Zelaya’s ouster on June 28 was not a coup, saying he was voted out of office by Congress and soldiers who arrested him were obeying a Supreme Court order. However, interim President Roberto Micheletti has said the military’s decision to fly him to Costa Rica instead of jailing him may have been mishandled.

The joint chiefs of staff insisted Tuesday that the military acted to save Honduras from dictatorship. Honduras’ Supreme Court had ordered Zelaya’s arrest on abuse of power charges for trying to hold a referendum on changing the constitution in defiance of court rulings declaring the vote illegal.

“What the armed forces did on June 28 was the defense and survival of the state, which was under threat,” Rear Adm. Juan Pablo Rodriguez said on “Face to Face,” a show on local Channel 5 television. He was accompanied by military chief Gen. Romeo Vasquez and two other generals.

Zelaya’s opponents say he was trying to change the constitution to abolish term limits and extend his rule, as his ally Hugo Chavez has done in Venezuela. Zelaya denies that was his intention.

Top US general in Iraq calls American role crucial

CAMP RAMADI, Iraq (AP)—The top U.S. commander in Iraq said Tuesday an American role over the next 2 1/2 years is crucial to ensuring legitimate national elections and helping Iraq become a long-term U.S. partner in the Middle East.

Gen. Ray Odierno disputed a colonel’s call for the military to declare victory and leave ahead of schedule, telling The Associated Press that the American presence is needed even though security is better than expected a month after Iraqi forces assumed responsibility for protecting cities.

“Our goal here given us by the president is a secure, stable sovereign self-reliant Iraq. We’re not there yet,” he said in a wide-ranging interview after

meeting with Iraqi officials at a U.S. base outside the Anbar provincial capital of Ramadi.

Odierno argued that U.S. troops should stay mainly to train and advise Iraqis to avoid a resurgence of major violence that would squander more than six years of enormous U.S. sacrifices. He cautioned that many obstacles remain, particularly Kurdish-Arab tensions that could stoke violence in northern Iraq.

His remarks came five days after the circulation of a controversial memo prepared by Col. Timothy R. Reese, a U.S. Army adviser to the Iraqi military in Baghdad. Reese argued that the American effort to train, equip and advise Iraqi security forces has reached

a point of rapidly diminishing returns and the U.S. should go home next summer, 16 months ahead of schedule.

The memo was intended for limited distribution among U.S. officers in Baghdad but ended up being circulated on the Internet last Thursday. It reflected the frustration of many American soldiers who feel they have done as much as they can after more than six years of warfare that has left at least 4,331 service members dead.

Iraq has seen relatively little violence following the June 30 deadline for Americans to pull back from urban areas to rural bases, although there have been periods of intense bombings.

“Overall it’s gone very, very well,” Odierno acknowledged.

Iran: Spy charges considered against 3 Americans

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Iran has arrested three Americans for illegally entering the country from neighboring Iraq and a prominent Iranian lawmaker said Tuesday that authorities were investigating whether to charge them with spying.

A U.S. official rejected the allegation, and a security official in Iraq said the three were merely backpackers who got lost while hiking in a mountainous region where the Iran-Iraq border is not clearly marked.

The case is the latest source of friction with Washington over the detention of Americans, following the espionage trial earlier this year of American-Iranian journalist Roxana Saberi. Such a confrontation could

be especially thorny this time around, when Iran is mired in its worst political crisis in 30 years over the disputed June 12 presidential election.

The Americans—freelance journalist Shane Bauer, his girlfriend Sarah Shourd and Joshua Fattal—were hiking in a picturesque region of Iraq’s northern Kurdish region near the Iranian border that is known for lush vegetation, pistachio groves and fruit trees.

The Iraqi regional security chief in Sulaimaniyah said the area is poorly marked and the three simply lost their bearings when they crossed into western Iran and were arrested on Friday. He urged Iranian authorities to free them.

“Our investigations proved there was no political or military reason for the border crossing. They simply made a mistake,” said the Iraqi official, Hakim Qadir Humat Jan.

“They came as tourists. Nothing about the way they were traveling points to a possibility of spying. Their financial situation was also weak—they traveled in a crowded bus and stayed at a cheap hotel—and they entered Kurdistan legally.”

“I call on the Iranians to set them free,” Jan said, adding that the mountainous area where the Americans were arrested contains dense foliage and narrow trails, and it’s difficult to make out where Iraqi Kurdistan ends and Iran begins.

WORLD BRIEFS

Colombia’s Uribe on trip to defend US bases pact

BOGOTA (AP)—President Alvaro Uribe headed off on a whirlwind South American tour Tuesday to defend his plans to expand the U.S. military’s presence in Colombia, a prospect that worries even friendly nations in the region. The trip coincides with a two-day visit to Brazil of U.S. National Security Adviser James Jones. Jones met Tuesday with President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva’s foreign affairs adviser, Marco Aurelio Garcia, who said afterward that the U.S. official acknowledged that Washington could have handled the issue better.

Police beat women opposing Sudan dress code trial

KHARTOUM, Sudan (AP)—Sudanese police fired tear gas and beat women protesting at the trial Tuesday of a female journalist who faces a flogging for wearing trousers in public. Sudanese journalist Lubna Hussein could receive 40 lashes if found guilty of violating the country’s indecency law which follows a strict interpretation of Islam. The 43-year-old says the law is un-Islamic and “oppressive,” and she’s trying to use her trial to rally support to change it. “I am not afraid of flogging. ... It’s about changing the law,” Hussein said, speaking to The Associated Press after a hearing Tuesday.

Nigeria survivors describe night of terror by sect

MAIDUGURI, Nigeria (AP)—They came in the night, screaming as they attacked policemen and soldiers in a series of assaults that escalated into a bloodbath that left more than 700 people dead. Victims described the July 26 onslaught to The Associated Press Tuesday, detailing highly coordinated and ruthless attacks by the radical Islamist sect, Boko Haram. From hospital beds with family members kneeling at their feet, survivors said attackers used guns, knives and machetes—the latter to avoid accidentally shooting each other—as they swept through military barracks, police stations, homes of law enforcement officials and at least 22 churches.

Niger votes on giving president 3rd term

NIAMEY, Niger (AP)—Bolstered by lucrative new uranium and oil projects, Niger’s president plowed ahead Tuesday with a referendum likely to extend his rule for years past the constitutional limit and grant him what critics say are near-totalitarian powers. The vote on a new constitution comes despite opposition among many who view it as illegal—from international donors who could cut crucial aid, to critics at home who say the Islamic nation’s nascent democracy has been hijacked by a new African strongman. “Our country is going backward,” lamented Abdul Razaq, a researcher at Niamey’s main university, who said he would not vote. “This is a profound setback for Niger, for Africa, for democracy.” Opposition leaders had called for a boycott and turnout appeared low in the capital.

Environment

Surveying for conservation

By KALANI REYES
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Hello and Hafa Adai! My name is Kalani Reyes. I am 17 and I'm an intern at the Coastal Resources Management Office for the Marine Monitoring Team under the mentorship of marine biologists John Starmer, Rodney Camacho, and David Benavente.

At CRM, my job entails working with the MMT team from CRM and the Division of Environmental Quality to monitor our coastal resources. I learned that, as part of the MMT team, monitoring can mean a lot of different things. It could mean surveying reef fish at fish markets, surveying reef flats, or surveying...well, you get the picture. We do a lot of surveying at my job, but that's because it is the best, easiest, and most efficient way to create an accurate image of just how our marine resources are doing—whether they are thriving or disappearing. You could also expect that almost everything we survey is reef-related because, frankly, our coral reef

Kalani Reyes snorkeling and collecting data for a lagoon benthic survey.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Peter Houk, Andrew Moses, Steven Johnson, and Kalani Reyes collecting data for a fish market survey.

is the most valuable marine resource we have.

As part of a team, I share all the projects I am working on with the other MMT interns—Steven Johnson and Tyler Warwick. We are currently working on algae, coral, and marine invertebrate posters, as well as creating parrotfish identification sheets to help us with our fish market surveys. I am also working on creating a ghost crab survey sheet. As MMT interns, we are kept busy with reef flat surveys, lagoon surveys, sea cucumber surveys, and a number of others, all to provide data that can help us form a good, accurate picture of how our marine resources are doing.

Different surveys measure different things, but in general I've had to learn the scientific (and preferably the Chamorro) names of different fish, sea cu-

cumbers, corals, and marine invertebrates. I also have to know how to distinguish them from each other because many times two species seem almost identical but have small differences. Looking for these differences is important—otherwise the data would get screwed up.

Besides going out every week to do surveys, we also do various other outreach, conservation, or ocean-related activities like attending the Pacific Islands Environmental Conference, or chaperoning 6th graders on their hike down to Bird Island. Though this sounds like a lot of work, I have enjoyed it all, and I can honestly say that I have had a lot of fun since I started work.

In the future, I hope to obtain at least a Master of Science in Marine Biology so that I can return to Saipan and continue working with our marine resources.

Learning about environmentally friendly habits

By FRANCISCO PALACIOS
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Guided by my wonderful mentors Janice and Fran Castro, interning at the Coral Reef Initiative Program has been quite an experience so far. Much of the work here has reinforced what I have been learning throughout my secondary education. Reaching out and educating the public about various environmental issues has not been easy, but it is what motivates me.

From working at the Division of Environmental Quality, I learned that the biggest threat to our environment is our lack of knowledge about what we can do to help it. This year DEQ and the Coastal Resources Management Office are launching a Green Business Initiative campaign to promote environmentally friendly consumer behaviors. I am proud to say that this summer I will be putting together a newsletter called the "Green Bulletin," as

well as working on the Green Initiative campaign along with other CRI interns. We will educate the public and raise awareness about environmentally friendly ways.

This year's newsletter focuses on new topics and ideas that will hopefully interest our focus groups. The newsletter will spotlight recycling, reusable shopping bags, alternative energy (SSHS), non-toxic household items along with other local environmental news. The main purpose of this project is to persuade communities on island to take part in these important matters. Making this project fun yet informative is the idea, but it doesn't come easy with a huge target group of different ages, ethnicities and interests. It will be challenging, but it is worth every struggle and hardship encountered, all for the gain of a healthier environment in the CNMI and worldwide.

Following the release of the



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Rodney Camacho, second from left, a Marine Resource Technician with the Coastal Resources Management Office, poses with three of the Coral Reef Initiative Interns after conducting a reef flat survey at the Coral Ocean Point. From left is Sharisse Rivera, DEQ Watershed Intern; Francisco Palacios, DEQ NPS Education & Outreach Intern; and Wen-Hui Ye, DFW Fisheries Intern.

newsletter, we will develop the social marketing campaign highlighting "green tips" and sustainable living. The main focus of this campaign is to promote reusable shopping bags and support for local farmers. In this task, we must start from scratch - from developing a logo and a slogan to establishing potential partnerships with other businesses who are also promoting green campaigns. Launching the campaign will take place through several methods of publicity, such as radio and television advertisement, brochures, posters, school/business presentations just to name a few. There is no guarantee for success on this project, but with careful strategic planning and with positive gains, I have no doubt people will begin to follow this "green" movement.

In addition to the two main projects, there were a couple of smaller tasks involved for the internship. The first was to

design a shirt for the 2009 Re-vegetation event on Rota. The second was to create a waterproof coral guide for our divers (scuba and snorkelers) so that they can familiarize themselves with the common corals found on our reefs. On top of that, interns had to attend and assist at the 26th Pacific Islands Environmental Conference held at the World Resort. Filled with useful information and influential stories, the PIEC was beneficial to the interns and overall, a triumphant three-day event.

The internship has not only been a wonderful experience so far, but also educational. More importantly, it has changed me in ways I never saw coming. Adopting behaviors and characteristics that are both environmental friendly and eco friendly has made me a better person. I've learned to love what I do here—for me, you and the following generations to come, so that we can live in a healthier world.

Life & Style

Can ABC's 'Millionaire' lightning strike twice?

NEW YORK (AP)—If it wasn't for the color of Regis Philbin's shirt, it might seem like 10 years hadn't flown by.

He was back on a colorful Manhattan soundstage, sitting across from nervous contestants hoping to strike it rich, taping a prime-time version of "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire." The game show will air on ABC for 11 nights this month, starting 8 p.m. EDT Sunday and ending two weeks later.

Philbin's shirt was white. The dark shirt with dark tie look, a signature that enabled Philbin to launch a now-defunct clothing line, was left in the closet.

Seeing the Oscar-winning movie "Slumdog Millionaire," where a version of the game show played a central role, left Philbin yearning for another chance to relive the best time of his career.

"The most striking thing is how much this means to Regis and therefore how much this means to me," said Michael Davies, who also returns as executive producer. "I'm extremely fond of Regis and I should have guessed at how much this meant to him."

Nostalgia aside, the game's corporate owners saw a chance to revive the brand for another generation of viewers and electronic devices. The syndicated

version of "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" with Meredith Vieira still airs each day. "This is a business play," Davies said.

The game premiered modestly in August 1999 with just under 10 million viewers and caught fire, drawing 22.4 million by the end of its summer run and even more upon a November return. "Is that your final answer?" became a national catchphrase.



Philbin

ABC rode the hit hard until it expired in 2002. Including a handful of "Super Millionaire" specials in 2004, the network aired 363 prime-time episodes.

"What are you going to do? You do what your boss wants," Philbin said. "When it went off, I thought that's what you get for giving too much of it away to the audience."

Philbin was clearly happy to be onstage for the first taping back, bantering off-camera with a studio audience that included several big winners from the past.

He turns away from a conversation with a contestant's girlfriend with some of his comic

mock outrage: "I just said to the girlfriend 'Drop him,' and everybody turned on me!"

The show's writers do him no favors. He's hit with the words "oleophobic" and "abyssopelagic" on two questions, forcing inevitable do-overs.

There are subtle differences to the game as everyone remembered it from years ago. The old "50-50" lifeline, where two of the wrong answer choices are wiped off the screen so a contestant has just two remaining choices, is replaced by the "double dip," where a player can make a second choice if their first is wrong.

Along with the chance to phone a friend for advice, contestants will be able to ask a celebrity expert. ABC's George Stephanopoulos, CNN's Wolf Blitzer, activist Al Sharpton and "Jeopardy" ace Ken Jennings are among those who help during the two-week run.

The biggest change is the introduction of a clock. Players have 15 seconds to answer the easiest questions, up to 45 seconds for the toughest ones. It eliminates the excruciating waits, often edited down for broadcast. One woman took 52 minutes to answer a question, and then got it wrong, Philbin recalled.

BEST SELLERS

Nonfiction

Outliers, by Malcolm Gladwell (Little, Brown: \$27.99). An exploration of the background of high achievers.

A Bright and Guilty Place, by Richard Rayner (Doubleday: \$25). The sagas of an ambitious young lawyer, a prime suspect in a mob murder, and a police photographer paint a picture of early 20th century Los Angeles.

Liberty and Tyranny, by Mark R. Levin (Threshold Editions: \$25). The talk-radio personality's call to revitalize the conservative vision in America.

Act Like a Lady, Think Like a Man, by Steve Harvey (Amistad: \$23.99). The talk-show host lets women inside the mind-set of a man.

Unmasked, by Ian Halperin (Simon Spotlight Entertainment: \$25). A look into the final years and days of Michael Jackson.

Catastrophe, by Dick Morris and Eileen McGann (Harper: \$26.99). A call to prevent President Barack Obama from transforming America into a socialist state.

The Last Lecture, by Randy Pausch with Jeffrey Zaslow (Hyperion: \$21.95). A professor's terminal cancer inspires a call to seize life's moments.

Crazy for the Storm, by Norman Ollestad (Ecco: \$25.99). The son of a daredevil tells of his life on the edge and how he survived a deadly plane crash.

The Waxman Report, by Henry Waxman with Joshua Green (Twelve: \$24.99). The congressman from Los Angeles gives insight on his 35 years in the House of Representatives.

The Accidental Billionaires, by Ben Mezrich (Doubleday: \$25). The story and phenomenon behind the founding of Facebook.

Fiction

Shanghai Girls, by Lisa See (Random House: \$25). Two sisters from Shanghai encounter tragedy and heartbreak as they are sold into arranged marriages in 1930s Los Angeles.

The Help, by Kathryn Stockett (Putnam: \$24.95). The lives of a maid, a cook and a college graduate become intertwined while changing a Mississippi town.

Swimsuit, by James Patterson and Maxine Paetro (Little, Brown: \$27.99). A supermodel disappears from a photo shoot in Hawaii.

Rain Gods, by James Lee Burke (Simon & Schuster: \$25.99). The sheriff of a Texas town investigates the mass murder of illegal immigrants on the Mexican border.

The Angel's Game, by Carlos Ruiz Zafon (Doubleday: \$26.95). A novelist in 1920s Barcelona takes a dangerous writing assignment.

Eclipse, by Stephenie Meyer (Little, Brown: \$19.99). Bella must choose between her lover and a friend, between life and death.

Breaking Dawn, by Stephenie Meyer (Little, Brown: \$22.99). The final book in the Twilight saga finds Bella choosing immortality.

Best Friends Forever, by Jennifer Weiner (Atria: \$26.99). Two childhood friends on the outs since high school reconnect when one is in trouble.

The Defector, by Daniel Silva (Putnam: \$26.95). When a Russian defector disappears, Gabriel Allon is forced to track down a deadly arms dealer.

Finger Lickin' Fifteen, by Janet Evanovich (St. Martin's: \$27.95). A witness enters a barbecue competition to uncover the killer of a contestant.

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Death and Funeral Announcement RAMON SANTOS TENORIO 'DOI'

Also known as "Pam"

Born September 26, 1960 was called to eternal rest
on Thursday July, 30, 2009 at the age of 48.

Our beloved now joins:

Father: †Joaquin Pangelinan Tenorio

Mother: †Antonia Santos Tenorio

Sister/ Brothers: †Herminia V. Tenorio, †Francisco V. Tenorio
‡Jesus V. Tenorio †Herman V. Tenorio
‡Ignacio V. Tenorio †Herminia T. Sablan
‡Joseph S. Tenorio †Linda T. Kumaichi

God Father: †Joaquin DLG. Sablan

God Mother: †Maria A. San Nicolas

Our beloved's spirit and fond memories will forever live in the hearts of Sisters/Brothers and Spouses:

Irene H. Tenorio (†Jesus)

Herman S. and Eleanor S. Dela Cruz

John S. and Juanet C. Dela Cruz

Jose S. and Divine C. Dela Cruz

Francisco P. Sablan (†Herminia)

Edward S. and Lillian A. Tenorio

Francisco S. and Yvonne B. Tenorio

Robert Kumaichi (†Linda)

Lillian S. Tenorio and John King

Maternal Aunts and Uncles:

Lourdes S. Waki

Jesus S. Santos

Justina S. Scherer

Paternal Aunt: Consolacion T. Sablan

God Father: Absalon DLG. Waki

Our beloved is additionally survived by numerous aunts,
uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Daily Mass is being offered at 6:00am at the
Mt. Carmel Cathedral. On Friday August 7, 2009,
the remains of our beloved will be escorted from
Borja's Funeral Home at 7:00am to the Mt.
Carmel Cathedral for viewing and last respects.
Mass of Christian burial will commence at
11:00am followed by interment service at the
Chalan Kanoa Cemetary.

Your prayers, thoughts and presence are
greatly appreciated.

Dangkulu na Si Yu'us Ma'ase,

Ginen I Familia

Fox says Paula Abdul is quitting 'American Idol'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Paula Abdul announced Tuesday she is quitting "American Idol," a show that she said became an international phenomenon with her help.

"With sadness in my heart, I've decided not to return" to the hit Fox TV singing contest, Abdul said in a posting on her Twitter account.

In a statement, Fox and the show's producers said Abdul was "an important part of the 'American Idol' family over the last eight seasons, and we are saddened that she has decided not to return to the show."

They said she was a "tremendous talent" and wished her the best.

On Monday, Fox announced



Abdul

that Kara DioGuardi would return for a second season on the "American Idol" judging panel that includes Simon Cowell and Randy Jackson. The addition of Grammy-nominated songwriter DioGuardi last year raised ques-

tions about Abdul's future.

In July, Abdul told The Associated Press that she had been invited to stay with "Idol" as long as the show lasted and that she was optimistic that she would be able to negotiate a new contract.

But the 47-year-old singer-dancer said the invitation to come back was subject to agreement on the details of a new deal.

Abdul began working with a new manager, David Sonenberg, in recent weeks.

"I'll miss nurturing all the new talent, but most of all being a part of a show that I helped from day 1 become an international phenomenon," Abdul said on Twitter.

No go: Paramount won't show critics 'G.I. Joe'



G.I. Joe team. The team from left-the members of the elite G.I. JOE team include team leader, DUKE (Channing Tatum), team commander GENERAL HAWK (Dennis Quaid), BREAKER (Said Taghmaoui), a specialist in deciphering covert electronics and technology, SCARLETT (Rachel Nichols), a martial arts master and skilled in the use of the Crossbow Pistol, and RIPCORDER (Marlon Wayans), an expert marksman and weapons specialist, in "G.I. JOE: The Rise of Cobra."

AP

LOS ANGELES (AP)—It's the biggest movie of the summer that practically no one has seen.

"G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra" opens Friday, but Paramount Pictures isn't screening the blockbuster for critics beforehand. Only a select few writers from blogs and movie Web sites have seen it for review—such as Harry Knowles, the self-professed "Head Geek" from Ain't It Cool News—and their opinions have been mostly positive.

Instead, the studio says it's intentionally aiming the movie at the heartland, at cities and audiences outside the entertainment vortexes of New York and Los Angeles. Paramount held a screening Friday for 1,000 military service members and their families at Andrews Air Force Base; it's also focusing marketing efforts in places like Kansas

City, Charlotte, N.C., and Columbus, Ohio.

While appealing to a sense of patriotism nationwide, the plan also is inspired by the disparity that existed between the critical trashing "Transformers: Rise of the Fallen" received and the massive crowds it drew at the box office.

"G.I. Joe" is a big, fun, summer event movie—one that we've seen audiences enjoy everywhere from Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland to Phoenix, Ariz.," said Rob Moore, vice chairman of Paramount Pictures. "After the chasm we experienced with 'Transformers 2' between the response of audiences and critics, we chose to forgo opening-day print and broadcast reviews as a strategy to promote 'G.I. Joe.' We want audiences to define this film."

With a reported production budget of \$175 million and

a cast that includes Dennis Quaid, Channing Tatum, Sienna Miller, Marlon Wayans and Joseph Gordon-Levitt, "G.I. Joe" follows the adventures of an elite team using high-tech spy and military equipment to take down a corrupt arms dealer. It comes from director Stephen Sommers, whose previous films include "The Mummy" and "Van Helsing."

Long before anyone saw the completed product, though, "G.I. Joe" drew mixed buzz at best for its trailer, which premiered during the Super Bowl. Now it's the final action picture of the summer—and it has a lot in common with the highest-grossing film so far this year, the "Transformers" sequel. Both are effects-laden spectacles based on Hasbro toys and both are Paramount releases from producer Lorenzo di Bonaventura.

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Aliens in the Attic

Fri. and Sat. 1:30 4:25 7:20 9:55
 Sun. thru Thurs. 1:30 4:25 7:20

Thomas Haden Church, Carter Jenkins
 Adventure, Family • Rated PG

Synopsis

A group of kids defend their Maine vacation home from knee-high alien invaders in this adventure comedy for the entire family. When Michigan native Bethany Pearson (Ashley Tisdale) arrives home after a secret outing with her boyfriend Ricky (Robert Hoffman), her father Stuart (Kevin Nealon) decides that it's high time for a family vacation. Packing up the car with wife Hannah (Ashley Boettcher) teenage son Tom (Carter Jenkins) and big sister Bethany in tow, Stuart invites the extended family to join them at the vacation home for some much-needed R&R and sets his sights on Maine.



Funny People

Fri. and Sat. 1:10 4:05 7:10 9:40
 Sun. thru Thurs. 1:10 4:05 7:10

Adam Sandler, Seth Rogen
 Comedy • Rated R

Synopsis

When seasoned comedian George Simmons learns of his terminal, inoperable health condition, his desire to form a genuine friendship cause him to take a relatively green performer under his wing as his opening act.



G-Force

Fri. and Sat. 1:15 4:15 7:30 9:45
 Sun. thru Thurs. 1:15 4:15 7:30

Nicolas Cage, Steve Buscemi
 Action, Animated • Rated PG

Synopsis

A group of guinea pigs trained by the government to work in espionage, armed with the latest high-tech spy equipment, soon discover that the fate of the world is in their paws. Tapped for the G-Force are guinea pigs Darwin the squad leader determined to succeed at all costs; Blaster, an outrageous weapons expert with tons of attitude and a love for all things extreme; and Juarez a sexy martial arts pro; plus the literal fly-on-the-wall reconnaissance expert, Mooch, and a star-nosed mole, Speckles, the computer and information specialist.



Harry Potter and The Half Blood Prince

Fri. and Sat. 1:05 4:10 7:15 10:10
 Sun. thru Thurs. 1:05 4:10 7:15

Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson
 Fantasy, Adventure, Sequel • Rated PG-13



Orphan

Fri. and Sat. 1:25 4:20 7:05 9:50
 Sun. thru Thurs. 1:25 4:20 7:05

Peter Sarsgaard, Isabelle Fuhrman
 Thriller, Horror • Rated R



Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs

Fri. and Sat. 1:20 4:30 7:25 9:30
 Sun. thru Thurs. 1:20 4:30 7:25

John Leguizamo, Queen Latifah
 Family-Oriented Adventure • Rated PG



Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen

Fri. and Sat. 1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00
 Sun. thru Thurs. 1:00 4:00 7:00

Shia LaBeouf, Megan Fox
 Sci-Fi Action • Rated PG-13

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1ST YEAR DEATH ANNIVERSARY

We the children of the late +Jose Arriola Benavente, together with our mother Martina Kogure Benavente would like to extend an invitation to all our family, relative and friends to join us in prayer as we remember our beloved Father in his 1st Year Death Anniversary.



In celebration of his new life there will be daily masses which will be offered at St. Jude Thaddeus Church in Kobler.

On the last day, Sunday, August 16 the family would like to invite everyone to join us for breakfast immediately after the 6:00 AM mass.



From the family

Un Dankulo Na Si Yuus Maase.



The schedule of masses are as listed below:

Saturday, Aug. 8	7:00 AM
Sunday, Aug. 9	6:00 AM
Monday, Aug. 10	6:00 PM
Tuesday, Aug. 11	6:00 PM
Wednesday, Aug. 12	6:00 PM
Thursday, Aug. 13	6:00 PM
Friday, Aug. 14	6:00 PM
Saturday, Aug. 15	7:00 AM
Sunday, Aug. 16	6:00 AM

Jackman may join circus with Barnum musical

Spielberg to be awarded Philadelphia Liberty Medal

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Filmmaker Steven Spielberg will be awarded Philadelphia's 2009 Liberty Medal for his artistic and humanitarian achievements on Oct. 8.

The National Constitution Center made the announcement Tuesday.

Spielberg's films include "Schindler's List," "Saving

Private Ryan" and "The Color Purple." He has also established a foundation to produce



Spielberg

oral histories of Holocaust survivors. The center says Spielberg will donate the award's \$100,000 cash prize to that organization, Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation.

The medal was established in 1988 to honor those whose actions represent the founding principles of the United States. Previous winners have included Bono, Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai and former U.S. President Jimmy Carter.

Modest Mouse video directed by Ledger debuts

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Heath Ledger's latest directorial work has been released.

The music video Ledger directed for "King Rat" by Modest Mouse debuted online Tuesday. The six-minute, animated video is both whimsical and dark, showing whales and dolphins aboard a ship, fishing for humans in the water.

It concludes with a message in white letters on a black screen: "This began with our friend, a great defender of life, and was completed in his spirit."

Ledger was 28 when he died last year. Modest Mouse announced in March that it would release the video "in honor of Heath's last piece of work as a director," according to spokeswoman Lisa Markowitz. The actor previously directed a video for one of Ben Harper's songs.



LOS ANGELES (AP)—Hugh Jackman is turning into one of Hollywood's biggest showmen.

Jackman may be following his song-and-dance triumph as host of the Academy Awards with a role as legendary showman P.T. Barnum in the musical tale "The Greatest Showman on Earth."

The film about Barnum and his three-ring circus is in development at 20th Century Fox. It is being produced by Laurence Mark, who produced last February's Oscar ceremony featuring Jackman as host.

A studio spokesman says the Barnum script is being written with Anne Hathaway in mind to co-star. Hathaway worked with Jackman on one of the Oscar show's musical numbers.

Jackman is a Tony winner for the Broadway musical "The Boy From Oz."

In this Tuesday, May 26, 2009 picture, Australian actor Hugh Jackman laughs during a news conference to promote the movie "X-Men Origins: Wolverine" in Mexico City. **AP**

Naomi Sims, among first black models, dies at 61

NEW YORK (AP)—Naomi Sims, whose 1968 Ladies' Home Journal cover shot was a breakthrough for black fashion models, has died. She was 61.

Sims, said by some to be the first black supermodel, died Saturday of breast cancer in Newark, New Jersey, said her brother-in-law Alexander Erwiah, the president of Naomi Sims Beauty Products. It had been decades since she left the runway to become an author and launch her own beauty empire.

Sims attained success at the same time that the "Black is Beautiful" movement was taking hold, and her accomplishments as a barrier-breaking African-American model helped pave the way for the black runway stars of the 1970s, including Pat Cleveland, Alva Chinn and Beverly Johnson.

Sims often spoke of her difficult start—as a gangly foster-care kid in Pittsburgh who towered over the other children in her school. In 1966, she came to New York City to attend the Fashion Institute of Technology on scholarship.

When she began approaching modeling agencies, she

was turned down again and again—with some telling her that her skin was too dark. Instead of giving up, she pushed forward and approached photographers directly.

The approach landed her the cover of The New York Times' August 1967 fashion supplement. She used that photo to market herself directly to advertising agencies, and within a year she was earning \$1,000 a week and appearing in a national television campaign for AT&T. Before long, she was modeling for top designers.

Sims gave up modeling after five years and launched her own wig-making business geared toward black women. She eventually expanded the multimillion-dollar business to include beauty salons and cosmetics, and she wrote "All About Health and Beauty for the Black Woman" and other books.

Sims was born in Oxford, Miss., in 1948. Her parents divorced soon after she was born and her mother moved Sims and her two sisters to Pittsburgh.

Besides her son, Sims is survived by a sister, Betty, and a granddaughter.



AP

This June 23, 1969 file photo shows model Naomi Sims in New York.

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Emily Blunt's 'Young Victoria' to end Toronto fest

TORONTO (AP)—Next month's Toronto International Film Festival is ending on a regal note. The closing-night film of the 10-day festival will be "The Young Victoria," starring Emily Blunt as the British queen in the early days of her nearly 64-year reign. The film from French-Canadian director Jean-Marc Vallée also stars Jim Broadbent, Miranda Richardson, Paul Bettany and Rupert Friend. Julian Fellowes, who won an Academy Award for his "Gosford Park" script, wrote "The Young Victoria" screenplay. Running Sept. 10-19, the Toronto festival is a major launching point for Hollywood's fall releases and Oscar contenders.

Lorrie Morgan joins Broadway's 'Pure Country'

NEW YORK (AP)—Country music star Lorrie Morgan has been added to the cast of "Pure Country," which is expected to open on Broadway early next year. Producer Randall Wreghitt (REGG?it) says Morgan will join Joe Nichols, another well-known country singer, in the musical based on the hit 1992 movie starring George Strait and Lesley Ann Warren. The film has been adapted for the stage by Peter Masterson. It will have a score by Steve Dorff, who wrote songs for the film, including two No. 1 country singles, "Heartland" and "I Cross My Heart." Both will be in the stage version.

Parents should answer girl's threat with some tough love

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: I feel like my heart has been ripped out and stomped on. My 18-year-old daughter, "Emily," hooked up with a 27-year-old ex-convict ("Jerry") and had his baby three months ago. Although we disapproved of the relationship, we let him move into our home. A month later, I caught him with another girl and my daughter ended their relationship.



Dear Abby

Last week, Emily announced that Jerry wants her back and has admitted all his wrongs. Abby, she wants us to let him move back in! My husband refuses to support them any longer. Emily has now chosen Jerry and says she is taking the baby, even though she has no place to go because he's still living with the other girl. Neither of them can afford an apartment.

I feel if I don't go along with it I am throwing my innocent grandchild out into the street, and it breaks my heart. Is tough love the right answer?

CRYING IN VIRGINIA

DEAR CRYING: Yes, so call her bluff. Tough love would be better than allowing your daughter to blackmail you, which is what she's attempting to do. It's unlikely that Emily will wind up on the street.

I seriously doubt that Jerry will give up a sure thing and a roof over his head to build a life with your daughter. When she wakes up to that fact, I predict she'll be back on your doorstep—so be prepared.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My husband's grandson just graduated from the eighth grade. Because he lives in another part of the state we were unable to attend the graduation, but we sent him a graduation card with \$5 enclosed.

My husband's daughter called to acknowledge the card "for" her son. Then she asked if my husband was having financial difficulties because he sent only \$5 while some of her friends gave her son \$50. She said we should have sent more. My husband was so shocked by her insensitivity that he hung up on her.

His daughter did not call or send a card on Father's Day. However, today we received a card from his grandson thanking us for the \$5 and saying if we had dug deeper and added \$1, he could have bought a slice of pizza.

Abby, how do we respond to these two?

HURT GRANDPARENTS, ANAHEIM, CALIF.

DEAR HURT GRANDPARENTS: Unbelievable. Your husband was kind to send the boy anything in addition to the card. His daughter's response shows where her priorities are. I'll give her son this: He did acknowledge the gift—but he should have stopped at thank you and omitted the snide remark.

How should the two of you respond? By keeping the lines of communication open and your wallet closed.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I was raised to respect people's personal space, especially when standing in line. However, often when I stand in line patiently waiting my turn, I find the person behind me practically breathing down my neck. I keep telling myself to politely ask for space, but I can't muster the courage because I'm afraid they will think I'm rude. How can I ask for space without sounding rude?

NEEDS MY SPACE IN CONNECTICUT

DEAR NEEDS YOUR SPACE: For heaven's sake, muster the courage. The last thing you need is a stranger standing behind you watching you enter a pin number on a debit card.

There is nothing nasty about turning around and saying that when someone stands too close it makes you uncomfortable and to please step back. Speaking up for yourself isn't rude. It's being assertive—which is healthy when compared to feeling like a doormat.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write *Dear Abby* at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds only) to: *Dear Abby—Wedding Booklet*, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes



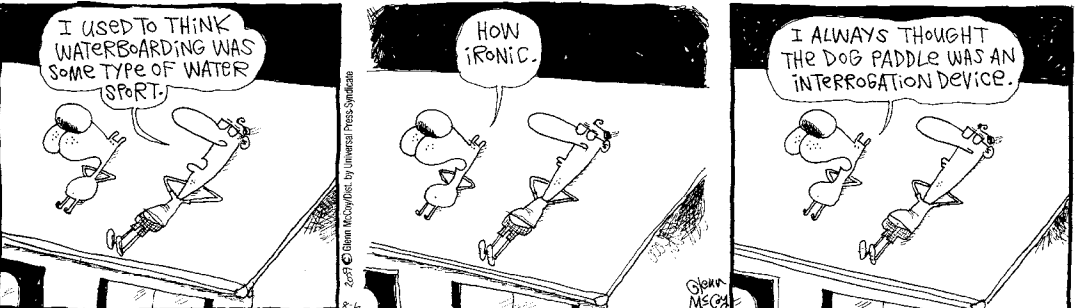
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ACROSS

1 Elmer, to

4 Prison

8 Tiers

12 Gabor or Peron

13 Relaxa-tion

14 Send forth

15 "The island of romance,"

17 Baseball team

18 Do sums

19 "Rocka-bye Baby" site

21 Russian wolfhound

24 Tend the lawn

25 Mound stat

26 "— Miniver"

28 Cheesy chip

32 Dracula's usual target

34 Conger, e.g.

36 Reclined

37 Clan emblem

DOWN

1 Year-end

2 Eventual

3 Waterfall

4 Hardly ever

5 — chi

6 "It — Fair"

7 Get more ammo

8 Cancel-lation's opposite

9 Leave out

10 Drunkard

11 Put one's foot down?

16 Wood-shaping tool

20 A billion years

21 Crooked

22 Sandwich treat

23 Anger

27 Prepared

29 Under-ground cemetery

30 Wasted no time

31 Erstwhile

33 Peeper's place?

35 Pitcher part

38 Dr. Seuss' "Mr. Brown Can —! Can You?"

40 Cellist Pablo

43 Open a bottle

45 Cath. or Prot.

46 Clear of snow

47 Bygone times

48 Ski lift

49 Movie-dom's "Elephant Boy"

53 Sawbuck

54 Earth (Pref.)

55 Pigs' digs

Solution time: 25 mins.

ASK FARM DAME
RUN OGEE ODO
ICE DOGEAT DOG
AHEAD TIC
BEES LOBBY
UNDERDOG MIRE
FIE SUPRA RIG
OGLE CHILIDOG
SHELFS PIN
ADO MAGIC
DOG PADDLE ODE
IRIS DOIN OLD
GENE SEPT DYE

Yesterday's answer 8-6

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Geri Halliwell, 37; M. Night Shyamalan, 39; Jeremy Ratchford, 44; Michelle Yeoh, 47

Happy Birthday: There will be questions regarding partnerships and who should do what. You may have to back away from a dicey situation. Observation and dedication will be the only way to achieve your goals and come out on top. Your honesty will help you stay in the game and call the shots. Your numbers are 9, 13, 15, 17, 26, 34, 45

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Keeping things to yourself will give you greater leverage when you want to negotiate personally or professionally. Communicating with people who have common interests will lead to advancement but is likely to create jealousy. ★★★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't fall victim to a fast talker or someone pressuring you to make a hasty decision. Don't promise or donate time or your assistance before knowing exactly what's involved. Listen, be patient and keep your distance. ★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Take a lead position. You have charm, wit and the wherewithal to get others to do things for you. Your energetic, go-getter attitude will inspire others to support your effort. Be prepared to do the legwork. ★★★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You may be tempted to take the easy route, allowing someone else to call the shots but, at the end of the day, you will regret not taking matters into your own hands. Take note of what's important to you if you want to be successful and find happiness. ★★★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't be afraid to share your dreams and ask for input that will help you achieve your goals. Progressive, aggressive action will help you get your point across. A contract can protect you and your interests. ★★★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): The more you accomplish, the greater the impression you will make. If someone doesn't live up to your expectations, move on. Take on whatever task is left undone and show your ability to do things on your own. ★★★★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't be a follower when you have so much to gain by making your own way. Let your imagination drive you to bigger and better accomplishments. You should be intent on presenting your own reforms and ideas. ★★★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't take chances; not everyone is in your corner. Opposition will be fierce. A short trip will give you some fresh ideas and help you make some changes that will catch everyone off guard. ★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You can accomplish your goals but not at the expense of someone else. If you meddle or take on a task that is too great, you will end up looking bad. Take your lead from a more conservative friend or observer. ★★★★★

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Use your past experience and acquaintances to get things right this time around. Just because something didn't work a long time ago doesn't mean it won't work now. Your timing is much better to redo, reinvent, recycle and renew. ★★★★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Your original ideas will lead you down a path that is exciting and can change your life considerably. Don't let someone's negativity get you down. You are in a good position to debate your case and win. ★★★★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Work secretly if you want to avoid setbacks, disturbances and opposition. Make a couple of alterations at home. A carefully orchestrated talk will keep the one you love protected until your plans are doable. ★★★★★

Birthday Baby: You are practical and passionate and possess a good memory that serves you well. You are competitive, captivating and cautious, always looking for adventure and knowledge.

Eugenia's Web sites: astroadvice.com for fun, eugenialast.com for confidential consultations

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

Difficulty Level ★★★

8/06

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

5	2	1	6	3	7	9	4	8
7	8	3	4	5	9	2	6	1
6	9	4	2	8	1	7	5	3
9	5	6	3	2	4	8	1	7
4	1	7	8	9	6	5	3	2
8	3	2	7	1	5	4	9	6
1	7	5	9	6	8	3	2	4
2	4	9	1	7	3	6	8	5
3	6	8	5	4	2	1	7	9

Difficulty Level ★★★

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WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

GO PINK FOR A CURE Solution: 9 letters

N	A	V	S	N	O	I	T	N	E	V	E	R	P	M
D	O	V	E	A	N	S	N	G	I	A	P	M	A	C
E	F	I	L	M	O	V	E	M	E	N	T	M	R	Y
T	N	R	H	M	I	S	S	I	O	N	M	E	T	R
E	O	S	E	S	T	A	R	N	E	O	S	I	I	L
C	I	T	S	H	A	T	S	N	G	E	N	R	C	E
T	T	E	N	A	I	F	E	R	A	U	E	A	I	W
S	U	L	O	R	C	M	A	R	M	V	U	I	P	E
R	B	E	I	E	O	M	C	M	E	S	S	S	A	J
E	I	C	T	W	S	H	O	I	E	T	R	E	T	R
T	R	A	O	Y	S	C	H	A	R	I	T	I	E	S
S	T	R	M	E	A	C	W	I	B	A	K	C	X	M
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S	O	I	R	O	R	S	O	O	A	A	I	R	M	E
L	C	S	P	M	T	N	D	W	C	S	P	E	S	T

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Yesterday's Answer: Magnesium

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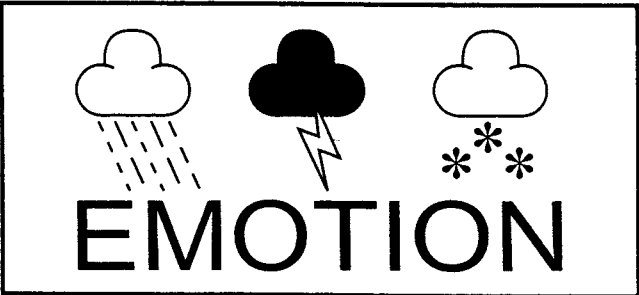
Jose R. Ramos	153441
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Hank Aaron says release 104 drug names



**PALM
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GARDENS,**

Fla. (AP)—Hank Aaron wants the list of players who tested positive for performance-enhancing drugs in 2003 to be released.

In a wide-ranging interview Tuesday night with The Associated Press, the Hall of Famer said releasing the list would help Major League Baseball get past the so-called “Steroid Era.” The list was supposed to remain anonymous and is now under court seal, but big names have continued to leak out.

“I wish for once and forever that we could come out and say we have 100 and some names, name them all and get it over and let baseball go on,” the former home run king said. “I don’t know how they keep leaking out. I just wish that they would name them all and get it over with.”

Aaron also wanted to make a few other things clear.

No, he has not spoken with commissioner Bud Selig about banned Pete Rose being reinstated in baseball. But he does think it’s time Rose, the career



Hank Aaron discusses baseball today during an interview in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., Tuesday, Aug. 4, 2009, before he spoke to the RBI World Series banquet.

hits leader, be reinstated and voted into the Hall of Fame.

Rose agreed to a lifetime ban from baseball in 1989 after an investigation concluded he bet on the Cincinnati Reds to win while he was manager

of the team.

“How long does a person have to die?” Aaron said. “I think the thing that bothers me is that he is missing out on a lot of things. He made a mistake. I don’t know what else can be

done, or what else can be said. I just think at some point he needs to start enjoying being a Hall of Famer.”

Aaron spoke to the AP before a banquet for the 17th Annual RBI World Series. The program is

designed to increase participation and interest in baseball for youths and minorities—one of the primary issues Aaron is working on.

With the number of blacks in the majors dwindling in the past few decades, Aaron said MLB—and everyone—could do more to curb the numbers.

“You always think that a program needs to do more, no question about it, if you have the funds,” Aaron said. “We all need to do more. I think we all need to do more to help.”

However, since steroids have come become one of baseball’s biggest problems, the thought that the game is still tainted doesn’t sit well with Aaron, who held the home run record with 755 until Barry Bonds broke it.

Neither does the fact that

some of baseball’s biggest names—including a New York Times report last week that identified Boston slugger David Ortiz and former teammate Manny Ramirez—continue to pop up on what has simply become known as “the list.”

There were no penalties for a positive test in 2003—the anonymous tests were conducted to determine if it was necessary to impose mandatory random drug testing across the major leagues in 2004. But federal agents seized the results as part of the BALCO investigation. The players’ union has argued the search was illegal, and the case is currently before the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

At the event in Palm Beach Gardens on Tuesday night, Aaron said he often delivers a message to kids about getting involved in baseball but also about staying out of trouble. He thought the same message could apply to some major leaguers.

“I tell them you may not be able to hit 700 home runs, but you need to do the right things,” Aaron said. “There’s no shortcuts in life. Everything is going to catch up.”

Longoria’s 13th-inning homer beats Red Sox

ST. PETERSBURG, Florida (AP)—Evan Longoria hit his second homer of the game, a two-run shot off Takashi Saito with two outs in the bottom of the 13th, to give the Tampa Bay Rays a 4-2 victory over the Boston Red Sox in the American League on Tuesday.

Longoria, who struck out four times, homered in the eighth off Daniel Bard, tying the score 2-all.

The Red Sox bullpen worked out of jams in the eighth, ninth and 10th innings, but couldn’t hold off the Rays for a fourth time. Boston’s Dustin Pedroia grounded into an inning-ending double play with the bases loaded in the 10th.

White Sox 5, Angels 4

At Chicago, Scott Podsednik’s RBI single with two outs in the ninth lifted Chicago and snapped Los Angeles’ eight-game road winning streak.

Kevin Jepsen (3-3) retired the first two batters in the ninth, then allowed Jayson Nix’s double and Podsednik’s single.

It was the third game-ending hit this season by Podsednik, a 2005 World Series star for Chicago who was re-signed by the team after Colorado cut him in April.

Yankees 5, Blue Jays 3

At Toronto, Andy Pettitte won for the first time in six starts as New York hit three homers off Roy Halladay to beat Toronto.

Pettitte (9-6), who had not won since July 1, allowed one run and four hits in 6 2-3 innings, walking four and striking out six. He left with runners at first and second in

the seventh but Phil Hughes came on and struck out Jose Bautista to end the inning.

Hughes gave up two singles to begin the eighth, then struck out two batters before being replaced by Mariano Rivera. Vernon Wells greeted the Yankees closer with a two-run double off the wall in left, cutting it to 4-3. Rivera finished for his 31st save.

Orioles 8, Tigers 2

At Detroit, Brian Matusz and Baltimore spoiled Jarrod Washburn’s debut with Detroit.

Cesar Izturis and Nick Markakis both homered, drove in three runs and had three hits for Baltimore.

Matusz (1-0), the fourth pick overall in the 2008 draft, allowed a run and six hits in five innings in his major league debut. He walked three and struck out five.

He was 7-0 with a 1.55 ERA for Double-A Bowie before being recalled on Tuesday.

Twins 10, Indians 1

At Cleveland, Scott Baker pitched seven scoreless innings and was backed by home runs from Carlos Gomez and Jason Kubel as Minnesota trounced Cleveland.

Gomez had three hits and four RBIs, and Joe Mauer hit three of Minnesota’s season-high seven doubles as the Twins broke a three-game losing streak.

Justin Morneau drove in two runs, giving him an AL-leading 88 RBIs. Orlando Cabrera, recently acquired from Oakland, extended his hitting streak to 14 games and hit his 400th career double.

Mariners 7, Royals 6

At Kansas City, Missouri, Ichiro Suzuki homered to lead off the game and ended it with a great sliding catch as Seattle snapped a five-game losing streak to Kansas City.

The Royals loaded the bases with two outs against Seattle closer David Aardsma with two singles and a walk. John Buck lifted a high fly ball to right and Suzuki went into a feet-first slide to make the game-ending catch in foul territory. Aardsma earned his 26th save in 28 opportunities.

Russell Branyan’s RBI single off Ron Mahay put Seattle on top 7-6 in the seventh. No. 9 hitter Michael Saunders had three hits for the Mariners, who beat Kansas City for the first time since July 13, 2008.

Athletics 6, Rangers 0

At Oakland, California, Gio Gonzalez threw 6 2-3 innings and Kurt Suzuki homered to lead Oakland past Texas.

Mark Ellis had three hits and three RBIs for the Athletics.

Michael Young extended his hitting streak to 11 games with a double in the eighth but the Rangers lost for the third time in four games.

Gonzalez (3-2) took a no-hitter into the fifth before giving up a two-out hit to David Murphy. He retired 14 in a row to that point.

Dodgers 17, Brewers 4

At Los Angeles, Manny Ramirez ended his 10-game RBI drought with a homer and a two-run double in the Los Angeles Dodgers’ vic-

tory over the Milwaukee Brewers.

Matt Kemp had a homer among his four hits while driving in five runs. Kemp had two hits and two RBIs during the seven-run sixth inning, while Russell Martin reached base five times and had three RBIs in the Dodgers’ highest-scoring home game in 30 years. With a season-high in runs on 18 hits, Los Angeles improved the majors’ best record to 66-41.

Diamondbacks 6, Pirates 0

At Pittsburgh, Yusmeiro Petit took a no-hitter into the eighth inning and combined with Leonel Rosales on a one-hitter as Arizona beat Pittsburgh.

Petit (2-5), who snapped a seven-game losing streak with his first victory in more than 11 months in his most recent start, walked three and struck out four in eight innings. The right-hander threw a season-high 107 pitches—73 for strikes—in going longer than seven innings for the first time in his career.

Ronny Cedeno lined a single to left after Ramon Vazquez led off the eighth with a walk, ending the quest for what would have been the second no-hitter in Diamondbacks history.

Rockies 8, Phillies 3

At Philadelphia, Garrett Atkins homered and had a season-high four RBIs, and Jason Hammel pitched into the seventh inning as Colorado beat Philadelphia for its fifth straight win.

Atkins hit a two-out, two-run homer off Jamie Moyer (10-8) in

the second inning, then added a two-run double in the sixth after the Phillies cut the lead to 4-2 on a home run by Jimmy Rollins.

Colorado added two runs in the inning to put the game out of reach. The Rockies finished with 11 hits as every starter except second baseman Clint Barmes had at least one.

Cubs 6, Reds 3

At Cincinnati, left-hander Tom Gorzelanny turned his first appearance for Chicago into his best of the season, allowing three hits and driving in a run in a win over Cincinnati.

The Cubs got Gorzelanny (4-1) and reliever John Grabow from Pittsburgh in a five-player deal Thursday. He went 7 1-3 innings, giving up one run. Vladimir Balentien hit a two-run homer off Angel Guzman in the ninth.

Gorzelanny had an RBI single off Johnny Cueto (8-9), setting the Reds on course for their 14th loss in 15 games. Cincinnati has dropped eight straight—all at home—for its longest losing streak in four years.

Nationals 6, Marlins 4

At Washington, Adam Dunn capped Washington’s six-run eighth-inning rally with a two-run homer as the Nationals ended a 10-game losing streak against Florida.

Dunn struck out in his first three at-bats before lining a 3-2 pitch from Dan Meyer over the left-field fence, breaking a 4-4 tie. The Nationals were trailing 4-0 heading into the eighth and hadn’t had a base runner since the first inning as Florida starter

Josh Johnson retired 20 consecutive batters.

But the Nationals got four straight hits to start the inning. Pinch-hitter Ronnie Belliard’s two-run double was the final one, and that ended Johnson’s night.

Cardinals 12, Mets 7, 10 innings

At New York, Albert Pujols hit a grand slam in the 10th inning, his second homer of the game, as St. Louis outlasted New York.

Pujols finished with four hits and five RBIs for the Cardinals, snapping out of a slump with his ninth multihomer game of the season. Ryan Ludwick also went deep and drove in two runs for St. Louis.

Giants 8, Astros 1

At Houston, Jonathan Sanchez snapped a nine-game road losing streak, striking out eight in seven shutout innings as San Francisco thrashed Houston.

Sanchez (5-9), who pitched a no-hitter against San Diego on July 10, held Houston to four hits, all singles. The 26-year-old left-hander was 0-8 with a 6.33 ERA in nine road starts this season and hadn’t won away from home since Sept. 12, 2008, in San Diego.

Braves 9, Padres 2

At San Diego, Javier Vazquez pitched seven strong innings and Martin Prado homered and drove in three runs to lead Atlanta past San Diego.

Matt Diaz hit a two-run homer and Prado had two RBIs in a four-run sixth inning as the Braves went ahead 7-2. Atlanta tied its season high with 17 hits and scored as many runs as it had in its last four games combined.

Pierce: No regrets over actions in Burress case



ALBANY, N.Y. (AP)— Seeing a bloody Plaxico Burress with a bullet wound in his leg in a Manhattan nightclub last November, New York Giants linebacker Antonio Pierce reacted instinctively.

He helped his teammate.

Pierce got Burress into a car, drove him to a hospital and then took the gun that Burress used in accidentally shooting himself back to his home in New Jersey, later arranging to get it back to the wounded wide receiver's home.

It was what any friend would do for another, and Pierce on Tuesday defended his actions and expressed no regrets for helping Burress.

Speaking a day after a grand jury decided not to indict him on charges of carrying Burress' unlicensed firearm in the aftermath of the shooting, Pierce said Tuesday he acted reasonably, responsibly and instinctively in aiding his now former teammate.

Pierce, who had been silent about the shooting for the past nine months, declined to discuss any details of the incident in an interview that lasted a little more than three minutes at the Giants training camp at the University at Albany.

"I am not sorry for how I acted that night. I am not sorry for how I responded," Pierce said of the Nov. 29 shooting at the Latin Quarter nightclub, about 36 hours before the Giants had a game against the Washington Redskins. "I am sorry for putting myself in position that I had to respond the way I had to

respond. There (are) a lot of lessons I learned from this. I take them to heart and I take them seriously, obviously. It has been a lot of ups and downs."

The grand jury indicted Burress on two counts of criminal possession of a weapon and one count of reckless endangerment. He faces a minimum prison sentence of 3 1/2 years if convicted. Burress pleaded not guilty to weapons charges earlier this year and is free on \$100,000 bail.

Pierce said the last nine months have been trying and that he was extremely relieved when the grand jury returned no true bill against him.

While he never showed any emotion, fellow linebacker Danny Clark shed a little light on how Pierce felt. He was with his training camp roommate when Pierce learned about the grand jury's decision, and he saw his reaction.

"Like a 10-ton brick was lifted off his back," Clark said. "We were optimistic that he was going to come out of it clean and he did, so I am happy about that."

The only trace of emotion Pierce seemed to have was a hint of bitterness toward Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau when he was asked whether he was surprised that Morgenthau pressed for charges against him in recent weeks.

"I leave that between me and the D.A.," Pierce said.

Pierce was glad that the grand jury heard the facts "from his lips" when he testified last Thursday and Friday.

"I thought I acted very reasonably and responsibly and instinctively to a



New York Giants linebacker Antonio Pierce talks to reporters during NFL football training camp in Albany, N.Y., Tuesday, Aug. 4, 2009.

teammate that was in need, and that was my concern that night, to get him help," Pierce said.

Pierce thought he conveyed that to the grand jury.

"When I was there for that long, I was sure they were listening very well because I was there for a long period of time," Pierce said. "You know what, I just let the action take course. The people of New York obviously heard what I had to say. They heard all the witnesses and from everyone involved in that night and they made a decision."

While he wasn't overly pressed,

Pierce twice refused to give details about the incident.

"I am tired of seeing myself on the TV and hearing my name on the TV," Pierce said. "It is time to talk about the New York Giants and the 2009 season. Anything that happened in 2008 is irrelevant at this point. I don't have nothing to say about that incident and that season because I have to move forward like our team does and that's what I plan on doing."

Pierce thanked his teammates and the Giants organization for its support.

"It's a lot easier when you are on

that green field with the boys," he said. "Obviously, coming back up to Albany and getting ready for the 2009 season, that's what I have been looking forward to and that's what they have been looking forward to."

Players said word of the grand jury's decision on Monday spread by word of mouth.

"I told Antonio: 'Hey, I don't know if this is congratulations or what,'" punter Jeff Feagles said. "But it's something to put aside, put it to bed and move on. He's our teammate now and just kind of support and move on, it's football time."

Defensive end Osi Umenyiora said that none of the players felt Pierce would go to jail. However, the decision removed a major distraction and insured that the Giants would have their starting middle linebacker available.

"I think he did what any one of us would have done," Umenyiora said. "I don't think he did anything wrong in any sense of the word."

The Giants released Burress in April and he has yet to sign with another team.

Burress' lawyer, Benjamin Brafman, said Monday he was disappointed but not surprised by the indictment, which came after Burress testified before the grand jury and expressed remorse. The grand jury heard the case after plea bargain negotiations broke down, apparently because Morgenthau was insisting that Burress serve at least two years in prison under any plea agreement.

"When you have the mayor and the district attorney both publicly demanding a maximum prison sentence, it was perhaps too much to hope for the grand jury to conduct a sympathetic review of the unique facts of this sad case," Brafman said in a statement.



NEW ORLEANS (AP)— Emeka Okafor didn't need to wait for his first game alongside All-Stars Chris Paul and David West to realize things were going to be different in New Orleans.

His first dinner with Hornets executives at one of Emeril Lagasse's downtown restaurants did the trick.

"I actually had rabbit gumbo," Okafor said Tuesday afternoon, when the Hornets formally introduced him as their new starting center. "I wasn't aware I even like rabbit, so there you go."

Even though Okafor wasn't looking for a new start, he figured change could be good for him at this point in his NBA career. He officially became a Hornet a week ago, when his first and only other team, the Charlotte Bobcats, traded him for 7-foot-1 center Tyson Chandler.

"I'm a very loyal person, so whatever situation I'm in, I'm for that cause," Okafor said. "So I wasn't in Charlotte hoping to get out. I was in Charlotte hoping to make it to the playoffs and elevate the organization to higher levels."

"Circumstances changed. I'm a Hornet. I'm happy to be a Hornet. Now that the circumstances have changed, the goals have changed."

Now the 6-foot-10 center, who has averaged 14 points and 10.7 rebounds through his first five seasons, looks forward to joining a playoff contender and a cast that includes Paul, West, sharpshooter Peja Stojakovic and two-time NBA champion James Posey.

"It's a more established team," Okafor said. "They're not necessarily focused on (making) the playoffs, but how deep can you go into the playoffs."

Okafor believes Hornets trade could be good move

While Okafor played with a rising young point guard—New Orleans native D.J. Augustin—in Charlotte, he expects that playing with Paul will elevate his production even more.

"He's one of the premier point guards in the league, and having a good experienced point guard makes all the

difference in the world," Okafor said. "So I'm very interested to see how that dynamic works."

Okafor also will rejoin backup center Hilton Armstrong, a former college teammate at Connecticut, and he'll get reacquainted with power forward Ike Diogu, whose parents,

like Okafor's, are came from the Igbo region of Nigeria.

When Diogu was a high school standout making college visits, Okafor was his host at UConn. Diogu chose Arizona State, but Okafor said he believed that was because Diogu liked ASU's computer science program.

NBA BRIEFS

Kobe-Shaq again on Christmas as Lakers host Cavs

NEW YORK (AP)—The NBA is bringing Kobe Bryant and Shaquille O'Neal together again for Christmas—this time joined by LeBron James. Bryant and the defending champion Los Angeles Lakers will host the Cleveland Cavaliers on Dec. 25, one of the highlights of the 2009-10 NBA schedule released Tuesday. It will be the fourth time in the five years since their partnership ended that Bryant and O'Neal will meet on Christmas. Traded to Cleveland in June, O'Neal will return to Los Angeles this year with James, who succeeded Bryant as MVP last season. O'Neal and James will play their first game together in the NBA season opener, hosting the Boston Celtics on Oct. 27. The four-game slate that night concludes when the Lakers open their title defense against No. 1 draft pick Blake Griffin and the Clippers. Defending Eastern Conference champion Orlando opens Oct. 28 against Philadelphia, then goes on the road two nights later to visit New Jersey, giving Vince Carter a quick return to

his former home. The Magic will visit the Lakers for an NBA finals rematch Jan. 18 as part of the schedule on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and Los Angeles will play at Orlando on March 7 for the first time since winning the title in June. Orlando also plays on Christmas, hosting Boston in a matchup of the last two East champions. Miami at New York, the Clippers at Phoenix and Denver at Portland round out that day's action.

NBA, union open collective bargaining talks

NEW YORK (AP)—The NBA and its players' association have held their first collective bargaining talks, meeting for 3 1/2 hours without exchanging any proposals. The sides shared financial information and called the session Tuesday "cordial and productive." They added they looked forward to sitting down again before the start of the season. The current collective bargaining agreement runs through the 2011 season—the league has an option to extend it a year - but owners and players decided on an early start to discussions with many teams struggling because of

the economic crisis. No deal is expected anytime soon. NBA commissioner David Stern has said the central issue will be the split in revenues, with the players currently collecting 57 percent.

Knicks work out Williams, but make no offer

NEW YORK (AP)—Jason Williams has worked out for the New York Knicks, though the team made no contract offer to the point guard. Williams, who worked out Tuesday, is attempting a return from retirement this summer and the Knicks claimed him off waivers last week. They will retain exclusive negotiating rights if they make a contract offer by Thursday. Williams spent 10 seasons in the NBA before retiring last September, less than two months after signing with the Los Angeles Clippers. He said he retired because his wife had complications during her pregnancy. He could be a cheap option for the Knicks, who have been seeking point guard help. They lost out on Jason Kidd when he re-signed with Dallas, and have been considering Milwaukee's Ramon Sessions and former Indiana guard Jamaal Tinsley.

They'll play together at last, with the Hornets having signed Diogu as a free agent shortly after trading for Okafor.

Okafor was the first-ever draft pick of the expansion Bobcats, taken second overall in the 2004 draft.

Okafor said the trade to the Hornets—Charlotte's original NBA team until 2002—caught him "off guard a little bit, but change is good."

Bobcats coach Larry Brown led some to believe he wasn't crazy about Okafor's game when the coach joked that he'd give Okafor an A in stretching and pilates, but wanted him to get an A in basketball.

"That kind of got, I felt, a little bit out of hand," Okafor said, laughing. "I'd missed games previously and my mindset was, 'OK, I don't want to miss any games, so I'm going to do everything possible to stay on the court.' So I have a stretching routine 15 minutes before practice, 15 minutes after practice."

Okafor said he also practices pilates a couple times a week to strengthen his core in an effort to avoid back problems. It's tough to question the results. He hasn't missed a game in two seasons.

Chandler, the player Okafor will replace, was popular among teammates and fans in New Orleans, but his durability often came into question. Chandler missed 37 games last season and was ineffective while playing hurt the Hornets' a first-round playoff loss to Denver.

"What we've done is we've changed things—intentionally—because sometimes we have to break out of what's comfortable in order to grow," Hornets general manager Jeff Bower said. "Adding Emeka to our team forces us all to make changes and forces us all to take steps to move further."

Trench Warz X: Collision

Photos by
MARK RABAGO



Marianas Elite's Kelvin "The Big Hit" Fital, left, won against former PXC heavyweight champion Manny "The Enforcer" Chong of THUGCOP in the main event of Trench Warz X: Collision held last Friday at the Royal Taga Hall of the Saipan World Resort.



Guam's Jon "The Heat" Delos Reyes wraps his legs around the waist of Saipan's Chris "No Luv" Laayug in a defensive stance.



Gil "The Guamanian" Meno has ZOGAI Tanapag Beach Bad Boiz's top dog Shane "Insane" Camacho on a headlock in their grudge match.



Saipan's Fasi "Quickdraw" Jesse unleashes a barrage of punches against Guam's WarTeam Predator Combat's Nate "The Terrible" Flores, left, ren "The Killa" Quinata.



Spike 22 Ground-Fu MMA's Jun "Shockeraba" San Nicolas tries to extricate himself against the hold of Marianas Elite's Martin Ayuyu.



Referee Tony D'Angelo raises the right arm of Marianas Elite's Maitai "The Charger" Charley after he upset Pacific Games taekwondo gold medalist Sonny Charqualaf in their K-1 kickboxing match.



Marianas Elite's Myron "The Natural" San Nicolas pummels Eric "The Terror" Tedtaotao of Team Lockdown in the semi-main event.



Spike 22's Tony "Rush" Reyes has his back to the camera as he tries to pin ZOGAI/Tanapag Beach Bad Boiz's Ryan Gardee.



Trench Tech Purebred Gym's Slade "The Rage" Adelbai, left, and Psycho Gym's Toby "Big Tobz" Mesa in action in one of two middleweight bouts.



Softball leagues meeting tonight

Representatives or coaches of teams interested in joining three leagues are asked to attend a meeting tonight at 6pm at the conference room of the Gilbert C.

Ada Gymnasium.

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Saipan Tribune Sports

Hank Aaron says release 104 drug names

Hank Aaron wants the list of players who tested positive for performance-enhancing drugs in 2003 to be released.



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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

CNMI bags 10 medals in MAC opener

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The CNMI collected two more medals in relay races bringing the Commonwealth's total in Day 1 of the Oceania Regional Championships 2009/Micronesian Athletics Championship to 10.

The CNMI won a gold medal in the women's 4x400 relay race and a bronze in the men's division during the opening of the regional meet being held at the Griffith University, in Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia.

Jacque Wonenberg anchored the CNMI quartet in the relay and took an early lead over Guam's first runner. Yvette Bennett and Lia Rangamar were the

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Matt Mancao, seen here competing in a middle distance race in a local tournament, almost quit in the 5,000m run in the Oceania Regional Championships 2009 last Tuesday, as he had difficulty adjusting to the cold weather in Australia. Left, Jacque Wonenberg, practices a shot put drill at the Oleai Sports Complex before leaving for the tournament in the Land Down Under.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

CNMI bets battle flu, fatigue, injury

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The CNMI Athletics Team survived several obstacles in Day 1 of the Oceania Regional Championships 2009/Micronesian Athletics Championships en route to a strong start in

three-day tournament.

First was flu, which hit Trevor Ogumoro after more than 10 hours of traveling from Saipan to Griffith University, in Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia where the tournament is being hosted. The CNMI athletes

See CNMI BETS on Page 26

Wait-and-see mode in UFO caging playoffs

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Organizers of the 7th United Filipino Organization Inter-Organizational Basketball League are praying for cooperative weather, as they hope to start the playoff round in the masters and open divisions tonight.

Playoff games in the UFO caging were supposed to kick off last Tuesday, but it rained late afternoon, making the JP Center Basketball Court unplayable.

Northern Marianas Bartenders Association-Ebisuya was to collide with MIFICPA-Bowlers in the first game in the playoffs in the masters division. In the open division, defending champion Samahang Ilokano at Pangasinense-Marianas Wireless was to duel Ca-

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO

MDX-Armatech's Bernard Montano goes for a left-handed layup against Boholanos-University of Loyola's James Abuy during their game in the regular season in the masters division of the UFO caging at the JP Center Basketball Court last month.



Tough mission for CNMI Junior All-Stars

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



The CNMI Junior All-Stars are heading to Taylor, Michigan next week with a mission to give the Commonwealth its best finish in the

World Series.

The Thelma Mizer-managed CNMI Junior All-Stars gained a World Series entry after a three-year drought following a 10-9 win over Guam in the finals of the 2009 Asia Pacific Regional Tournament at the

Gelora Bung Karno Baseball Field in Jakarta, Indonesia in June.

The CNMI last made it to the Junior League division of the World Series in 2005. Actually, the CNMI Junior League All-Stars were in the World Series from 2001 to 2005 and had a combined record of 3-1, posting all their win against teams from Europe. From 2001 to 2005, the CNMI won no more than one game in the World Series.

In 2001, the Commonwealth bets' lone victory was against Poland, 11-4. In 2002 and 2003, the CNMI was winless in three games in each year. In 2004, the CNMI youth slug-

gers had a 1-3 slate, topping Belgium, 8-1. The Commonwealth posted the same record in 2005, beating Netherlands, 6-3.

This year, Mizer's crew hopes to pass the one-win mark

"A tough task lies on the shoulders of our Junior All-Stars. They know CNMI baseball fans are counting on them in the World Series and they will do their best to live up to expectations," Mizer said.

The CNMI Junior All-Stars is composed of Christian Mizer, Jeremy and Henry Rabauliman, Lamar Iguel, Frankie Camacho,

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Brian Camacho makes eye contact with catcher Henry Rabauliman during their game against Rota in the district meet in June this year at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield. Camacho is with the CNMI Junior All-Stars who will compete in the World Series in Taylor, Michigan later this month.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO